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FLORENTINE SCULPTORS OF THE RENAISSANCE

By

WILHELM BODE

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WITH 94 PLATES

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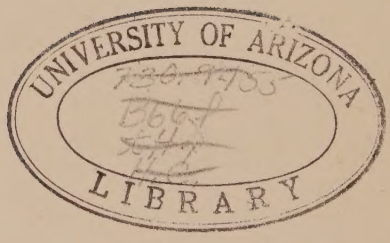

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FLORENTINE SCULPTORS

INTRODUCTION

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FLORENTINE SCULPTURE AND ITS PLACE IN THE RENAISSANCE ART OF ITALY

FLORENCE is the home of modern Art; here, in the soil of the Arno city the tender plant first took root, here during the succeeding centuries it continued to put forth new and plendid blossoms. This glory has been and always will remain ers beyond dispute, despite the fact that the North developed its wn important art side by side with her, and that Northern Italy —influenced alike by East and West—repeatedly infused fresh lements into her, which helped to ripen the last great epoch of talian painting to full maturity.

In no branch of art has Florence so unqualified a claim to this re-eminence as in sculpture. Though the sister cities of Pisa and iena made the first definite start, Florence by the thirteenth entury had taken the lead; the sculpture of the Renaissance had s birth here, here it went through all the phases of its development, nd here, finally, its transition to the baroque was prepared. As ntique sculpture culminates in Greece, so that of the Christian poch finds its crowning expression in the plastic art of Florence. n two cities only has that branch of art been able to attain to its ll and glorious prime in unrestrained freedom: in Athens and in lorence.

What may be said of Italian sculpture of the Renaissance in eneral is true in particular of that of Florence. All the peculiar ualities of that art are here developed in their purest and most naracteristic form, for they were the product of the soil, spring- g from the very life and soul of the people, unalloyed by alien dmixture or influence. While Florentine painting of the same eriod was deriving some of her best powers from the neighbouring

provinces—notably does she owe her pre-eminence in colouring to these 'foreigners'—plastic art, in whatever branch, was carried out by Florentines. Indeed, so rich was Florence at this period in talent that she could afford, out of her abundance, to supply not only all Italy, but the rest of the Continent. As none but men of first-class talent had any chance at home, the rest were obliged to seek fields of activity elsewhere, and thus spread the Florentine Renaissance over the whole of Italy, with the result that every branch of plastic art was left free to develop in its utmost purity in the mother city. It possesses in an unusual degree the subjective charm of Renaissance art; the specifically Florentine style is here impressed on every strongly marked artistic individuality in a quite peculiar and significant way.

The conditions of Florentine society were peculiarly conducive to the revival of those germs of art that had lain dormant in the Etruscan soil for wellnigh two thousand years to blossom forth once more in tenfold glory. The free form of government and the part and interest taken by every citizen in its decisions secured to the artists every facility for unrestrained development, while the predominance of certain wealthy families, especially the Medici, supplied the necessary practical aid. But it was not from the capricious favour or the autocratic will of a tyrant, but from the general and all-pervading sympathy with her aims that Florentine art drew her chief encouragement and support; and from the spirit of emulation which alike inspired the citizens, the Guilds, the ecclesiastical communities to build and decorate the public edifices, plastic art in particular found scope for unlimited activity till the fall of Florentine liberty.

To be sure, the Church still remained the chief source of employment for the sculptor, however the monuments are no longer erected from exclusively pious motives, but rather from the modern feeling for the artistic adornment of public buildings, and a growing sense of national and local importance. Hence, it is on the churches of the patron saints of the cities, the Guilds and great families that the richest decoration is lavished, and that not so much on the altars or the interior generally as the exterior, whereby the streets and squares receive a character and adornment to delight the eye of every Florentine, gentle and simple. Thus the church of the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, was furnished with its

magnificent bronze doors; the façade of the Cathedral which was consecrated to the oldest patron saints of the city, the Campanile, and Orsanmichele were lavishly decorated with statuary. For the adornment of S. Lorenzo the Medici, who built the church, were responsible, as were other wealthy Florentine families for the rich decoration of S. Maria Novella, the Badia, and S. Croce. And though here the decoration confines itself almost exclusively to the interior, yet the artistic and national character is predominant. Not the vainglory of the individual, not the ecclesiastical love of pomp filled the churches of Florence with statues and monuments, as in the capitals of the Italian despots and in Rome, but the gratitude of the Florentines for services rendered to their beloved city. Not only the great statesmen of Florence, the benefactors of the people, but also her great poets and artists were laid to rest in her churches, and monuments erected to them by the foremost sculptors of the day. Thus the chief churches of Florence became not merely places of worship but temples of fame, where civic virtue and genius—a nation's most sacred possessions—received, to an extent unknown elsewhere in Italy, their meed of praise and thanksgiving.

The taste of the Florentines for decorating and beautifying their streets is also evident in the numberless shrines, many of which are the work of eminent artists, who did not disdain, moreover, to satisfy the artistic cravings of the less wealthy citizens by providing plaster copies, which, when tinted and framed, were to all appearance the same as the more expensive originals. The enormous number (about ten times greater than that of the original reliefs) of these tinted plaster works, mostly Madonna reliefs, which has come down to us, despite their fragile nature and small intrinsic value, shows how widespread was the love and even the understanding of art among the Florentines of that day.

Of course, the large majority of these works, even if in private possession, were of a religious nature, and were placed in shrines on the outsides of the houses, in the courtyards, the oratories, and more particularly the bedrooms, for purposes of devotion. Otherwise, it was but rarely till the time of the Grand Dukes that sculptors were employed in the decoration of private houses, save in the matter of the richly carved mantelpieces and architraves found in most of the palaces. On these the portrait busts, which had enjoyed much favour in Florence since the middle of the fifteenth

century, found a place: in clay, plaster, or wax for those who could not afford marble. But beyond this the plastic decoration of the Florentine house did not venture. The lavish decoration of the rooms with little bronze objects of art for the writing-table, the ledges of chimneypiece or door, introduced into Venice from Padua and thence to most of the neighbouring courts in the Quattrocento, was unknown in Florence till the restoration of the Medici. Some of the bronze figures or statuettes produced, more especially under Lorenzo de' Medici, by the sculptors in bronze attached to that family doubtless found a place in the art collections which adorned the studies of Piero and Lorenzo in the Palazzo Medici.

The Renaissance in Florence brought every branch of plastic art into play almost from the first, but not till Michelangelo did it reach its full and perfect development. As in the Trecento, so in the Quattrocento the relief is the favourite expression of the sculptor's activity, and though exhibiting the utmost variety of treatment, is always subordinated to the monument of which it forms part, and so, according to its position, is now low, now high, now strictly plastic, now freely pictorial in its technique. To be sure, the pioneers of the early Renaissance, Donatello at their head, produced, besides reliefs, statues, portrait busts, equestrian figures and groups, but these are all treated more or less on the lines of the relief because they were almost invariably designed for placing in niches or shrines, or on brackets against the walls. And in the rare instances where the group is visible from all sides—such as Donatello's 'Judith and Holofernes,' originally on a fountain in the Palazzo Medici—it is by no means satisfactory from all points of view. The single figures are much better in this respect, as Donatello's bronze 'David,' also originally in the Medici Palace, where in all probability it stood free; but more especially the two magnificent equestrian statues executed by Florentine artists for alien cities, namely Donatello's 'Gattamelata' for Padua and Verrocchio's 'Colleoni' for Venice.

The first attempts at modelling the figure or the group in the round were made by the artificers, such as Antonio Pollaiuolo in his small bronze works, but more especially Bertoldo, Michelangelo's instructor. These small, mostly nude figurines by the Florentine bronze casters show very clearly the twofold aim of the Renaissance artist: to copy nature and to follow the antique, each one seeking

to reach that goal along his own peculiar lines. To interpret the subject by the utmost lucidity of pose and expression, and to follow nature as closely as possible in the reproduction of the human form, was to the artists of the fifteenth, and even to some of those of the sixteenth century, the highest aspiration; and they all regarded the Antique as the hitherto unattained Ideal. In the various methods by which they strove to reach that goal we find the expression of an infinite variety of individual temperament. But the differences which characterise the art of the Early and the Late Renaissance, and which are particularly marked in the sculpture, are already evident in a measure from the very outset of the new movement, more especially in the works of the three great sculptors who have always been regarded as its leaders.

Lorenzo Ghiberti's figures and compositions show a grandeur of conception, a boldness in the flow of outline and drapery, a sense of beauty and pathos which make them at once the grand finale of Trecento art and the herald of the Late Renaissance. But they are wanting alike in the naïve sentiment of the earlier art and the more highly developed skill and knowledge of the later period, so that it needed a genius of Donatello's quality—keen of observation and unswervingly faithful in the reproduction of nature—to counteract Ghiberti's somewhat sentimental and flaccid tendencies, and to guide art into new and broader paths.

Donatello himself grew up in the ways of the Trecento, yet by his peculiar honesty and freshness of vision he was able by degrees to throw off the conventions that trammelled his art and to attain to a simpler and truer point of view. This free outlook, this thoroughness and love of truth which does not shrink even from the ugly, and scorns to pander to the taste for the merely pleasing, makes Donatello the greatest character artist of all time. To him, therefore, Florentine art owes her marked predilection for the individual, the characteristic, and her untrammelled and many-sided development of each talent according to its peculiar bent. Yet this marked realism, so conspicuous and, to some periods and even individuals of our day, so repellent as to preclude all enjoyment of his work, was but one aspect of Donatello's versatile genius. For with that realism was combined an abounding imagination and power of embodiment, a monumental dignity, a depth and nobility of emotion, and a profound respect and intelligence for the antique.

All this went to make of Donatello's genius an inexhaustible source, a well-spring of living art, enabling him to give of his best with a lavish and unstinting hand, and in each new work to bring out some fresh evidence of his unwearied study of nature.

In the contemplation of his numerous works, which are stamped with an almost excessive portrait-like individuality, one is too apt to forget that Donatello produced figures as grandly typical and as noble as ever did Masaccio, figures which Italian art took for models till Michelangelo's day. His heroic figures such as the 'St. George,' the 'David,' his pious anchorites, his priests and monks, his inspired prophets and evangelists, are each and all types of the contemplative or militant church; his 'Gattamelata' is the incomparable presentment of a far-seeing leader of men, his 'youthful St. John' of the enthusiast for the faith; his numberless Madonnas are sublime figures of the Mother of God filled with a solemn sense of divine mystery and foreboding.

Another counteracting force against the strong realism of the Renaissance, and of Donatello's tendencies in particular, was the intense admiration and consequent imitation of the antique. And though its adaptation by the artists of the fifteenth century was peculiar and individual, and shows but little evidence of the true spirit of classicism, its influence was nevertheless so extraordinary that the term 'rinascimento'—rebirth of antique art—for this period is entirely justified. Without those remains of Roman art which they had constantly before their eyes the artists of the fifteenth century would have developed along the same lines as those of the same period in the North under the guidance of Sluyter and the Van Eycks; on these classical models they built up, not only their expression of form, but also their monumental style.

The great work which stands at the opening of the new period, the competition-models for the second bronze door of the Baptistery in Florence, already shows in a high degree this veneration for the existing remains of classic art and their adaptation to the present purpose. In Brunelleschi's relief we have a free rendering of the antique 'Boy extracting a Thorn,' and in Ghiberti's a figure almost faithfully copied from the so-called 'Idolino' in the Munich Glyptothek. But no artist of the Renaissance was so ardent a worshipper of the antique or studied its works so carefully as Donatello. That only a careful scrutiny reveals this in his works is another proof of

the artist's independent method of applying what he had learned. Donatello probably stood in the same relation to his patron Cosimo as afterwards his pupil Bertoldo did to Lorenzo and Piero de' Medici; and in a series of his works we find single figures, even whole groups, taken from antique models, while for Cosimo he executed actual reproductions of antique cameos, or introduced them into the decoration of his own work. Witness the relief in the court of the Medici Palace, the ornaments on the bronze 'Judith' and 'David,' and on the bust of the so-called 'young Gattamelata.' And this had its origin as much in Donatello's love of the antique, especially of gems and intagli, as in Cosimo's delight in his priceless collection.

But the picture of the plastic activity of Florence at the beginning of the Renaissance is not complete without mention of a third, somewhat younger, artist whose far-reaching influence on the development of Florentine sculpture was the more remarkable in that he seems to have actually trained but one pupil—his nephew. Luca della Robbia, inclined by nature more towards Ghiberti's art, but thoroughly trained to realism under Donatello's influence, reveals in his works but slight study of the antique compared with his two older contemporaries. Yet in the technique of his reliefs—whether alto-rilievo or the less frequent low relief—in the modelling of his figures, their drapery, their classical beauty and stately repose, no artist of the Renaissance stands nearer to the best period of the antique than Luca della Robbia, and this notwithstanding that his sentiment is entirely modern and wholly imbued with the spirit of Christian devotion.

In the blaze of this great trinity of stars the smaller lights, with which the artistic firmament of Florence was thickly strewn during the first half of the Quattrocento, needs must pale. Among those who, though earnestly striving after freedom of expression, were yet fettered by Gothic convention, Niccolò d'Arezzo is of importance, far beyond his artistic achievement, as having been the first to carry the new art across the boundary of Florence and Tuscany to the North, to Venice, and most probably to Lombardy. To the same category belongs another Florentine whose name has not come down to us, but who is known to us from his chief work in Verona as the 'Sculptor of the Pellegrini Chapel,' one of those sculptors—still deep in the traditions of the Trecento as to technique and

composition—who in Florence at the beginning of the Quattrocento answered the demands of the growing cult of the Virgin with their innumerable tinted Madonna reliefs, and in their varied representations of Mother and Child display a depth of tender emotion and a faithful observation of nature that bring them close to Luca della Robbia. A younger generation, mostly followers of Donatello, who, overshadowed by the great masters, could find little or no employment for their modest talents in Florence, spread themselves over the whole of Italy. Giovanni Rosso, sometime fellow-worker with Donatello, erected in Verona the first great monuments in the style of the Renaissance; Piero di Niccolo, another disciple of that master, goes with his father, Niccolò d'Arezzo, to Venice; a younger artist, Agostino di Duccio, obliged for some unlawful action to leave Florence, carries the new movement into Middle Italy, though unfortunately not in its best form. Other Florentines find serviceable openings in Rome and Naples, more especially the architect and bronze caster Filarete who went later to Milan, where Michelozzo, Donatello's partner for so many years, was at work nearly at the same time.

Meanwhile a new generation of plastic artists had grown up in Florence. The freedom in modelling, the mastery of technique, which the older masters had acquired painfully and by slow degrees, the younger ones learned from them in a turn of the hand, as it were, whether for marble or bronze. For the knowledge of the technique of both these materials they had to thank Donatello, who worked in marble and in bronze simultaneously, and by the employment of numerous assistants in both these branches of plastic art gave the impetus to their widespread exercise.

Pre-eminent among Donatello's followers and probably his pupil is Desiderio da Settignano, who by subtlest modelling, exquisite smoothness and warmth of tone, imbued his marble with an incomparable charm. His tender and gracious Madonnas, his jocund Babes and lovely angels, his youthful portrait busts, are brimming over with life and joy; beautiful, vivacious figures taken from the life of the people, but raised to an ideal plane attained by no other artist of the Renaissance. His fellow-artists and followers, more especially Bernardo Rossellino and his brother Antonio, Mino da Fiesole, and Benedetto da Maiano, tread successfully in his footsteps. And if their works lack something of Desiderio's freshness and

sparkling vivacity, if their figures assume more and more a certain insipid and conventional character, yet the structure and decoration of their numerous magnificent and varied monuments are so beautiful, their portrait busts are so full of individuality and of such marvellous finish, that they form one of the high-water marks of the Renaissance.

As compared with marble the slow and laborious processes demanded by the less responsive bronze forced its disciples to a stricter study of form and graver characteristics. The Florentine bronze sculptors of the second half of the Quattrocento, Antonio Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio at their head, upheld Donatello's high traditions in this branch when the marble workers had abandoned them. In the 'Colleoni,' the companion monument to Donatello's 'Gattamelata,' Verrocchio has given us in its highest form the peculiar type of the Italian Condottiere, and no less grandly characteristic are his portrait busts; while his 'David' and his 'Boy with a Fish' combine with Donatello's absolute veracity and finished modelling a grace of movement, a sympathetic charm, that make them fit companions to Desiderio's engaging figures.

With the younger generation of Florentine sculptors of the last quarter of the fifteenth century the characteristic, the simple, the grand receded ever more into the background. The sculptors of bronze absorbed themselves in extreme elaboration of detail, in grace of attitude and charm of expression, while the marble workers, carried away by the facile character of their medium, tended more and more to superficial and stereotyped modelling, to mere prettiness and sentimentality. Even more than with contemporary painting does one feel that art had outworn the old lines and could go no further upon them. But the whole trend of life, the political and social conditions, had undergone a complete change, and the result was the birth of the new 'classical art' which stood in many respects in direct opposition to the art of the Quattrocento. Two artists, both of them Florentines, set their mark indelibly on the new period: Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Leonardo, who had grown up in the midst of the art of the Quattrocento and had a remarkable influence on its development during the last quarter of the century, quietly and gradually prepares the way for the new art and guides it into the appointed path. Michelangelo, younger by nearly a generation, with his unique and mighty genius confronts

the naturalistic art of the Quattrocento so violently that he does not reform, he demolishes it.

There were certain points which reacted unfavourably on the development of sculpture in the Cinquecento, particularly as compared with architecture and painting. Where it was employed in connection with architecture—and this was almost invariable, at least at the beginning of the century—the latter took the leading part and sculpture was limited to the decoration. But still more crippling was the influence of painting which, far more than in the Early Renaissance, was now the determining art, so that purely plastic conception was difficult of achievement. This made the sculptors increasingly dependent on the classical models available, most of which, however, were but mediocre Late Roman copies. It was unfortunate, too, that Leonardo da Vinci, the master who of all others was the most active agent in the new movement, should have occupied himself with sculpture only as Verrocchio's assistant, and have left Florence when quite young. Consequently he influenced Florentine plastic artists, too, chiefly through his paintings. The same, though to a less degree, may be said of Michelangelo. Hence among the sculptors reckoned to the Late Renaissance there are not a few who carry the prevailing spirit of the later Quattrocento far into the Cinquecento—the Ferrucci, Rovezzano, Torrigiano, and even Andrea Sansovino in his earlier works, exhibit the same light decorative style as the last marble sculptors of the Quattrocento, subordinating the figural part to the ornamental, even though the architectonic structure was more strongly emphasised and more classical in character.

Leaving Michelangelo out of account, the new phase of plastic art appears first and in its purest form in the two groups of the 'Baptism of Christ' by Andrea Sansovino and in Rustici's 'Preaching of St. John the Baptist' over the doors of the Baptistery, and both belonging to the Cinquecento. They were produced under the direct influence of Leonardo's and Michelangelo's cartoons of the 'Battle of Anghiari,' more especially that of the former, from which Michelangelo himself is not free. In the imposing typical figures with their heroic proportions and absence of all triviality, the dignified composure of attitude and expression, the bold employment of contrast between the pose of the various figures as of the limbs, both these works are eminent examples of the classical

art which appeared at the same time in the paintings of Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, and Raphael. The same spirit, too, breathes from Lorenzetti's bronze relief after Raphael's design of 'Christ and the Woman of Samaria' in S. Maria del Popolo at Rome, and—though produced almost a generation earlier—in Leonardo's relief with the 'Allegory of Jealousy,' of which there is a spiritless plaster copy in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

But the chief factor in the causes which prevented the free and unrestrained development of sculpture at this period was the stupendous influence of Michelangelo, whose overpowering and extraordinary genius began to dominate plastic art before the sculptors had attained to full knowledge of the laws of the anatomy of the human body. Andrea Sansovino, already, in his later works is wholly dependent on Michelangelo, in particular the frescoes of the Sixtine Chapel; and this is still more the case with Andrea's pupil, Jacopo Sansovino, and the rest of the Florentine sculptors of that period, scarcely one of whom was able to develop along his own individual lines.

All the higher does Michelangelo tower above them in Titanic majesty. A sculptor through and through, the plastic representation of the 'human form divine' was to him the highest mission of Art. And this he achieved in a manner which, though often directly opposed to the canons of classic art, is justified by its own laws. His art was so entirely subjective, and at the same time so overwhelming, that none could escape its influence, and it was inevitable that the further development of art, but more especially of sculpture, should be disastrously affected thereby. Taking the means for the end, the artists only slavishly copied the outward characteristics of the master's methods, departing farther and farther from the spirit of nature and the joy of reproducing her varied manifestations.

The baroque style, however, for which Michelangelo's later works had paved the way, did not appear in definite form till several generations after his death, and then not emanating from Florence, who with her freedom lost all the old fertility and abundance whereby she had nourished the arts. Masters from the North had to be called in to satisfy the demands of art, and before their dominating influence Florentine sculpture, as such, retreated irrevocably into the background.

I

DONATELLO AS ARCHITECT AND DECORATOR

CONSIDERING how extraordinarily many-sided were the Florentine artists of the Renaissance, particularly those of the Quattrocento, it seems strange that Donatello, the master of all others who led the new movement on to victory, should have occupied himself exclusively with sculpture. Where the artist has erected monumental works with architectural superstructure and profuse architectural decoration there is documentary proof that he usually collaborated with more or less inferior craftsmen. To these collaborators, more especially to the architect Michelozzo, critics have latterly assigned not only the execution, but the design of any such work as showed evidence of real power, making Donatello himself responsible only where in the ornament, in the architecture of the background, in the setting of the superstructure a fantastic or baroque motif seems to strike a jarring note. Against this C. von Fabriczy, in his authoritative work on Brunelleschi, points out that in the plans of the first model for the dome of the Cathedral in 1418, that artist had for his assistants Donatello and Nanno di Banco, who received the same remuneration as Brunelleschi, and consequently, no doubt, their share of honours in the result. From Gloria we learn almost simultaneously that the reason of Donatello's call to Padua in 1443 was most probably for him to finish the choir of the Church of S. Antonio, the screen and High Altar of which he afterwards erected. The whole question has been exhaustively treated by H. von Geymüller in an article, 'The architectural development of Michelozzo and his co-operation with Donatello,' in which he energetically asserts Donatello's claims to independence as an architect and as a decorator.[1]

Yet the researches of this most reliable authority on the subject are scarcely heeded; again and again is Michelozzo played off

[1] *Jahrbuch der K. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1894, p. 247 *et seq.*

against Donatello; latterly once more in a somewhat extensive study whereby one of our younger art historians has sought to win his spurs.[1] This is what prompted me to work up and publish the ensuing series of observations which I had already sketched out some years ago, but did not care to bring forward after this article of Geymüller's. In the main I come to the same conclusions which Geymüller, with far more technical knowledge and authority, has summed up in a few pregnant sentences; nevertheless, as I am able to bring forward some of Donatello's works which were unknown to him, and as also I was the first to draw attention again to Michelozzo as a sculptor and collate his works, I consider myself justified in entering the lists for Donatello's high place as architect and decorator against such superficial and disparaging criticism.

In the two decades during which the young Donatello was occupied almost exclusively with statues for the Duomo, the Campanile, and Orsanmichele, he had little opportunity of giving evidence of his gift for decoration. The shrine of the 'St. George,' for which he received the commission in 1415, is distinguished by its breadth of treatment and elegance of proportion, but the style is still pure Gothic, doubtless in compliance with the wishes of those who commissioned it, seeing that both in form and decoration it accords with the older shrines. Shortly before this Donatello had introduced into the relief under the 'St. George' a structure showing round arches supported on pilasters with simple Corinthian capitals, in which the skilful effect of depth by the foreshortening, the view into the interior, and the arrangement of its flagged pavement, must be regarded as striking signs of innovation.

Though still comparatively simple, there are evidences of a marked advance in the architectural background of some admirable little reliefs dating from the early twenties, and unquestionably the work of Donatello's own hand. The chapel-like niches and deep-vaulted arch behind a small Madonna accompanied by saints and angels playing on instruments, of which there are one or two stucco copies (one in the South Kensington Museum, another in the

[1] Fritz Wolff, *Michelozzo di Bartolommeo: A Contribution to the History of Architecture and Sculpture in the Quattrocento.* Strassburg, 1900. I will not enter into further discussion of this study; the author himself will, it is to be hoped, think fit to revise it and disprove his own arguments when, after years of study, he has gained a more intimate knowledge of Italian art and gathered more adequate material for the elucidation of these difficult questions. There is no more grateful task than that of correcting one's own errors.

possession of Dr. W. Weisbach, Berlin), animate and deepen the composition in the most skilful manner, as also in his 'Scourging of Christ,' a marble relief in the Berlin Museum, where can be seen the interior of a building in the background. Both examples bear eloquent testimony to Donatello's fine sense of form in architecture. The niches in the Madonna relief recall by their massive form, low relief, lofty vaulting and the rosettes between the arches, Brunelleschi's style of architecture, by which undoubtedly Donatello was influenced. Characteristic, too, for Donatello's work at this period is the perspective treatment of the framework, to be found again in the marble relief of the 'Pazzi Madonna' in the Berlin Museum (cf. Plate XXVII.), where it simulates a shallow window niche.

It was about the time when he was engaged upon these smaller works that Donatello first came into relations with the sculptor and goldsmith Michelozzo di Bartolommeo, his junior by ten years, with whom he soon afterwards entered into partnership; and during the next decade he executed with him a number of most notable monuments, the architectural and decorative features of which are particularly remarkable. These are, as far as we know at present, a relief and several statuettes for the font in S. Giovanni at Siena, the three well-known marble tombs, the outside pulpit of the Cathedral at Prato, and—the first of the series—most probably the bronze statue of 'St. Louis' and its niche. We will postpone the discussion of these works till later on, when we come to the final reckoning up between Donatello and Michelozzo.

Like all Donatello's Siena bronzes, the 'Salome' relief had, until a short time ago, been accounted particularly characteristic of the artist. However, now that a share has been claimed in it not only for Della Quercia, but more particularly for Michelozzo, I must discuss it with the other joint works of Donatello and Michelozzo. But there is no doubt of Donatello's sole responsibility for the slab of the Pecci tomb in the Duomo (Plate I.). The recumbent figure of the bishop, with mild and beautiful countenance, not unlike that of the statue of 'St. Louis,' rests as if asleep—the head gently inclined to the side and somewhat foreshortened—on a deep couch-like bier as at his lying in state. The slab is executed in the lowest, most picture-like relief. The poles for carrying the bier (the ends of which are now broken on the upper side) show the delicate twisted

Brogi

DONATELLO

TOMB OF BISHOP PECCI

Duomo, Siena

Alinari

DONATELLO

TABERNACLE

St. Peter's, Rome

work and ornaments of Donatello's favourite balustrade posts; they rest in beautifully sculptured rings, decorated, like the profiles of the bier and the slab, with the characteristic Donatello foliage; while the head of the bier is formed like a shell. The inscription, its massive lettering recalling that of the Coscia tomb, is on a scroll at the foot of the bier, which has been rolled up by a couple of *putti* who peep inquisitively over its edge. The crook of the bishop's crozier, which is seen beside the pillow, ends in an admirable statuette, a nude *putto*, sketched in in very low relief.

A few years later, as evidenced by the inscription, Donatello, while in Rome, executed the marble memorial slab to Giovanni Crivelli, Archdeacon of Aquileia, for S. Maria in Araceli. Even in its present dilapidated condition it plainly reveals its genuine Donatello origin, in the skilful arrangement of the low relief and foreshortening as in the scheme of ornament. The deceased is represented as if lying in an arched niche, which in its proportions and details bears close relationship to the present 'St. Thomas' niche in Orsanmichele. Two sprightly angels in light and fluttering draperies half kneel on the arch of the niche and support the coat of arms of the deceased prelate.

The reason of Donatello's journey to Rome in 1432 was, according to Vasari, that his pupil (whom Vasari erroneously describes as his brother), Simone Ghini, was anxious for the master's opinion on his model for a memorial tablet for Pope Martin v. A careful examination of this imposing bronze, now in S. Giovanni in Laterano, does indeed reveal its connection with Donatello, but that connection was even closer than Vasari assumes, in that both conception and detail point distinctly to Donatello's own designing, in spite of the inevitable alteration through Simone's carrying out of the model and the subsequent casting and cutting of the bronze. The scheme is almost identical with that of the Sienese memorial tablet, except that here the bier becomes more of a tomb, finishing off above and below with a semicircular arch. The figure, seen entirely from the front and above, shows, despite its somewhat stiff and commonplace treatment, unmistakable evidence of Donatello's design in the formation of the head as in the treatment of the material and the disposition of the drapery, but still more so in the coat of arms with the angels, the slender garlands of foliage and the use of heads in place of the corner capitals, and in the rosettes of the imposts. But

most characteristic of all are the cherub heads in the bosses of the frame of the coat of arms, which Donatello, in his peculiar striving to bring organic animation into the various architectural portions of his works, was so fond of introducing—for instance, in the bronze Madonna in the Santo at Padua (Plate XXVI.), and in a Madonna relief in the Louvre. The very marked characteristics of this tablet, combined with Simone's youthful age, make it very probable that Donatello was called to Rome that he might superintend the execution of his own design. Vasari, who proves himself remarkably well informed on all points relating to Donatello's sojourn in Rome, in making Simone Donatello's brother appears to be handing on an old tradition, though he misinterprets it: Simone was possibly the 'compagno' who, according to the documents in the cathedral archives at Prato, was in Rome with the great artist.

The most important work of Donatello's stay in Rome, the 'Tabernacle' now in the Cappella dei Beneficiati of St. Peter's (Plate II.), is certainly sketchy, not to say indefinite, in treatment, and judging from the quality of the stone, a light fine-grained travertine, an inexpensive piece of decoration, yet by reason of its fine architecture of peculiar interest. That the design for this is entirely due to Donatello, and that in its execution he had but the one assistant, as in the case of the Crivelli tombstone, is an undisputed fact. The tabernacle was designed for the reception of the Host, which stood in a locked shrine, and for this a rich frame was wanted which should occupy a prominent position in St. Peter's. Donatello could not imagine one that did not directly typify the sacrosanct contents of the tabernacle, which, being hidden from the profane eye by a bronze door, he contrived to make intelligible to the beholder in the sculptured framework of the tabernacle. The architectural features are almost entirely subordinated to the figures, so that the sculpture may stand out in full force and animation. The bronze door,[1] now replaced by a picture, is first framed by a quite narrow and plain band surmounted by a substantial pointed pediment in the angle of

[1] During the last year or two an unfinished marble relief of a full-length Madonna surrounded by angels playing on instruments has found its way into art commerce and is alleged to be the original door designed by Donatello for this tabernacle. Apart from the inartistic and unlikely assumption that a marble relief should have served as a door, it needs but a glance at the relief and its small-sized figures to show that it is out of all proportion to the size of the tabernacle. As a fact, this relief is merely a very much enlarged and coarse copy of a delicate plaque by Bertoldo in the Louvre.

which is a small medallion with the *Ecce Homo*, while an angel reclines on each sloping side—almost the sole distinct note of the antique in the whole work, here in the very centre of the antique world! Round this inner framework is the richly decorated exterior one. From a high socle resting on a massive console remarkable for its Gothic cube ornamentation (probably derived from the antique dentated ornament) rise a couple of slender grooved double pilasters, the outer ones seen from the side and standing back from the inner ones round whose base, at each side, a group of richly draped angels gaze upwards in adoration towards the Holy of Holies. In the socle itself four smaller angels are traced in low relief kneeling and holding ornamented discs. The pillars, which have broad Corinthian capitals and were possibly, like most of the decorations, originally enriched with gold and colours, support high consoles with volutes, and these again basket-like socles on each of which stands an angel. The two facing outwards hold up the curtain hanging from the massive cornice, and reveal the scene carved in low relief which illustrates the purpose of the ciborium in a dramatic manner—the entombment. This upper part is designed as a monumental theatre decoration, so to speak—the appropriate setting to this living picture. Here Donatello shows himself as much painter as sculptor, and from that point of view the whole composition and the separate details of the setting are masterly in conception and faultlessly successful in effect. In his keen sense of pictorial effect the artist goes so far as to present the ciborium not as a flat façade but as a square superstructure, producing this effect by repeating at each side, in profile, the pilasters with the socles and the angels. The ornaments—sparingly used and for the most part only lightly sketched in—are, with the exception of the cube design otherwise unknown in Florence and Rome, the simplest of those generally employed by Donatello, and most of which he shared with Brunelleschi—the oval, the curved leaf, particularly the leaf pointing upwards, the garland, both as a festoon and in a straight line, and the rosette. The slender vases, too, with sparse-leaved flowering shrubs springing pilaster-like from them introduced in very low relief on each side of the door, are wholly characteristic of Donatello.

In this period of his sojourn in Rome, or immediately following on it, I would be inclined to place—besides the relief of 'Christ handing over the keys to St. Peter,' which need not be considered

here—another small relief, the rich architecture of which is also most characteristic of Donatello. This is the small marble relief of the 'Dance of Salome' now in the Lille Museum, and perhaps identical with one mentioned as in the possession of the Medici (Plate III.). Though from the similarity of design and composition one would be inclined at the first glance to date it very little later than the bronze relief of the Siena font, yet the conspicuous similarity in the drapery and types with those of the St. Peter's ciborium, and the strong reminiscence of the ruins of ancient Rome betrayed by the massive, skilfully grouped architecture, leave little doubt of its date being about 1433. If the ciborium appears almost as a challenge to the antique, as a work in which the artist wished to show of set purpose that here, in the midst of the masterpieces of the ancient world which he so much admired, he yet strove ever to produce his best from his own untrammelled genius; in this small marble relief he exploits to the full the deep impression made on him by the ruins of ancient Rome, and produces by its aid a work of extraordinary imagination and fidelity to architectural laws. In the Siena bronze relief Donatello had been content to afford a glimpse through a row of pillars behind the banquet-room into two other apartments with a few figures; here he places the same scene in the beautifully paved courtyard of a Roman palace, through which we gain a view on the left into an open fore-court with a flat roof supported by columns, and behind that again, through a colonnade partially closed by an antique marble screen, is a corner view of another palatial building, while to the right of the foreground a high stone staircase leads to a gallery which gives access to another court. In this small space is a complete picture of the bold architectural features of the period of the later Roman Empire, translated, of course, into Donatello's own language. With marvellous skill the various structures are adjusted to one another, the figures are no longer separate, but grouped beside and behind one another with profound knowledge of artistic effect. What specially impressed the artist in the classic ruins of Rome, and what he studied and copied with the utmost industry, were the grand and simple proportions, the colossal yet organic masses, and the splendid material of the Roman buildings. Of this we have the proof not only in this small marble relief, but in a number of his later works, down to the reliefs on the bronze pulpit in San Lorenzo. That he also studied

Cayez, Lille

DONATELLO

THE DANCE OF SALOME

Alinari

DONATELLO

THE ANNUNCIATION

Santa Croce, Florence

with the deepest interest the details, especially the ornamental work of the ancient buildings, is shown in the rich diversity of classical motives seen in many of his works subsequent to the Roman journey.

Returned from Rome, Donatello at once set to work on the Prato pulpit, which we will examine with the rest of the monuments executed in collaboration with Michelozzo. At the same time he undertook alone the order for the Singing Gallery of the Duomo, and probably before this was finished began, commissioned by Cosimo, the decoration of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, for which he neglected or actually sacrificed various other important commissions —for instance, the bronze doors for the Duomo at Siena and similar doors, and a grand altar for the Duomo of his native city.

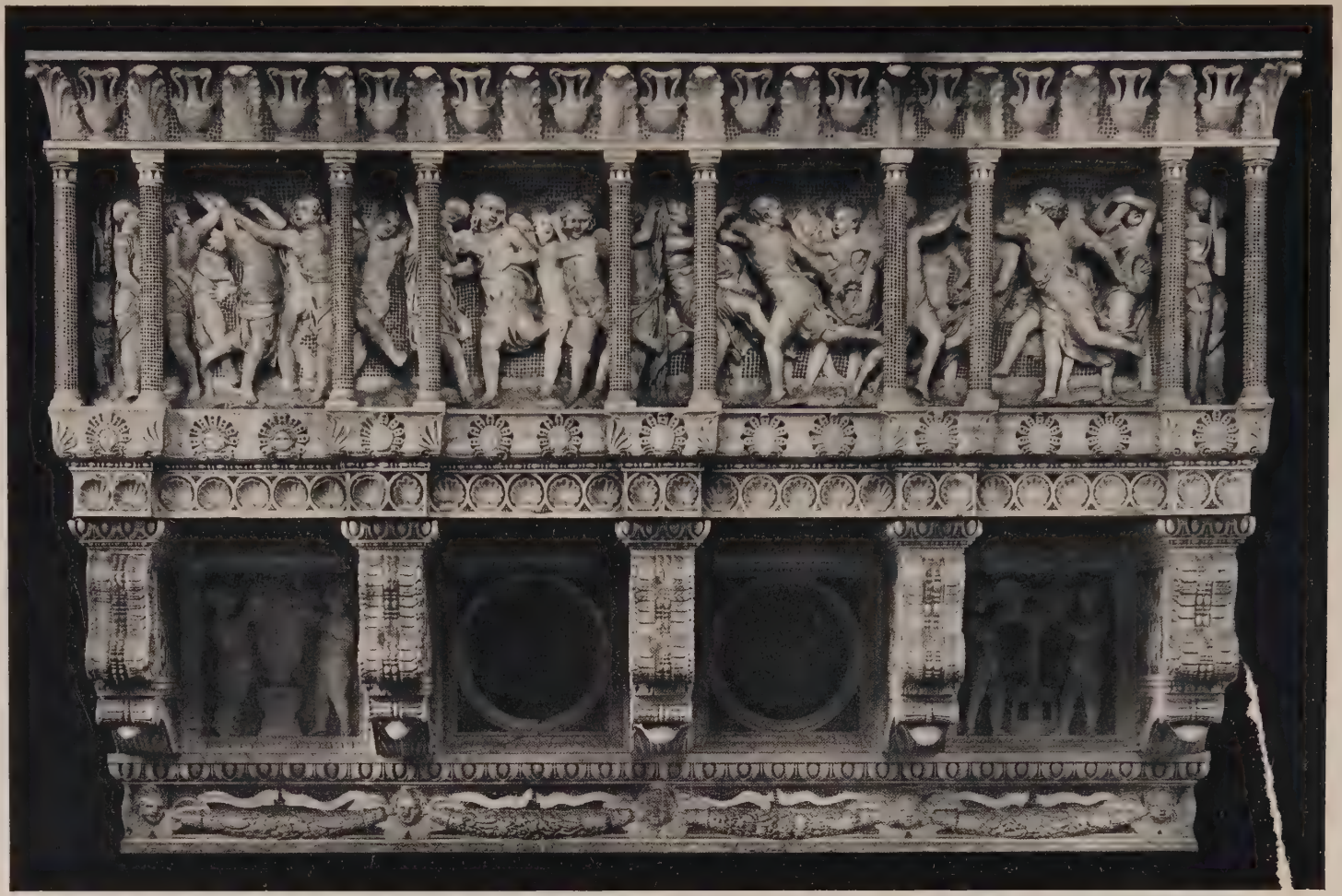
In view of its rich and in many ways classical scheme of decoration, to this period must be assigned the famous 'Tabernacle of the Annunciation,' placed by the Cavalcanti in S. Croce (Plate IV.), now that Vasari's dating of it as one of the master's youthful productions has very properly been abandoned. Yet the rounded forms, the charming heads, the thick drapery in full, somewhat restless folds, seem hardly probable after the Roman journey; besides, the kinship to the statuettes of the font in Siena and the 'Virtues' of the Coscia tomb (even though executed by Michelozzo) is too evident. We must place the 'Annunciation,' therefore, about the end of the twenties or beginning of the thirties, with which period too the character of the groups of children on the pediment may best be brought into accordance. The rich diversity of the decoration can obviously no longer be cited as an argument against this date, since, as we shall presently see, there is certain proof of the construction of the Orsanmichele niche between the years 1423 and 1425.

The architecture of the Annunciation relief has universally been ascribed to Donatello alone, certain baroque elements being considered so conspicuous that no one else, least of all Michelozzo, could well be made responsible for it. But in good sooth Donatello has no cause to be ashamed of the architecture of this work, though many details both in the execution and application can in no way be counted of classic origin. For this simple alto-rilievo, with its two figures almost in the round, the most elaborate setting he could devise, would only serve to enhance the composition. And of this opportunity the artist has taken the fullest advantage; scarcely a

space or line, however unimportant, but is decorated; a profusion of varied ornament adorns the whole work, which originally was further enhanced by colours and gilding; nevertheless, the effect though gorgeous is perfectly dignified and harmonious. The architectural and ornamental details are, without exception, most original and of high artistic merit, both as to their static and decorative quality; they in no way deserve to be described either as fantastic or baroque. The pilasters,[1] covered with a scale-like casing of laurel leaves, have for capitals masks with the strained expression characteristic of supporting a heavy weight, and as socles two small lion's paws joined by graceful volutes—an unmistakably classic motive treated with the utmost purity and admirably suggesting strength and steadiness. The frieze of the entablature—peculiarly beautiful in its proportions and outlines—which classical art leaves undecorated, is here, *horribile dictu*, ornamented with a band of enormous ovules, but treated in such a way that the ovals take the form of great pearls and alternate with arrows, thus accentuating the suggestion of weight and support. The pediment appears—probably for the first time in the Renaissance—as a wide, shallow arch with a great rosette in the centre, forming with the beautiful volutes at the corners and the line of smaller grooved rosettes on the cornice a most tasteful and symmetrical decoration. Despite the wide sweep of the arch, there still remains room at each end of the pediment for a couple of delicious *putti*, while two others (unfortunately mutilated, but quite recently restored), who most probably held a vase between them, lie on the top of the arch. Here, where they in no way interfere with the chief group, they bring a new sense of animation, and in their engaging pose and childlike playfulness strike a thoroughly human note in the design of the tabernacle. Equally expressive and tasteful is the treatment of the socle. Between two strong consoles, which support the pilasters, the socle immediately under the relief sweeps back in a shallow curve lightly resting in the middle on a beautiful laurel wreath with fluttering ribbons (probably in honour of the conqueror of Pisa, by whose descendants the monument was raised).

Donatello certainly used every opportunity of enlarging his

[1] Donatello's pictorial feeling for space goes so far here, as in the case of the St. Peter's ciborium, that on the side nearest the relief he makes the pilasters simulate columns by placing the masks on the inner corners of the capitals, although he does not treat the background of the relief in perspective, but merely as a flat panel.



Brogi

DONATELLO

CANTORIA

Museo dell' Opera, Florence

Brogi

DONATELLO

DETAIL FROM CANTORIA

Museo dell' Opera, Florence

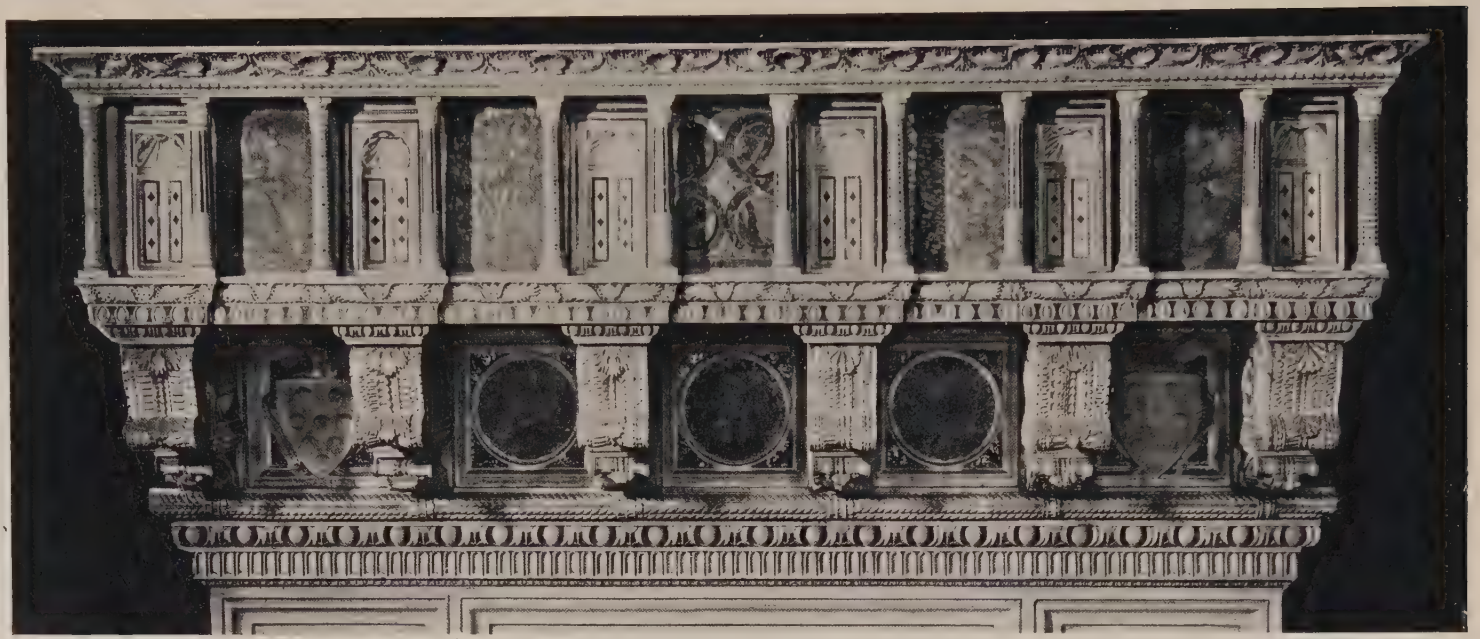
knowledge of classical ornament while at Rome, but that he was at small pains to improve upon that knowledge or to apply it always after the classical rules is well evidenced in the two closely related Choir Galleries of the Duomo and S. Lorenzo, for the former of which he received the commission and no doubt set up the model already in the first year of his return from Rome, although it was not finished till 1439 and not erected till two years later than that (Plates v. and vi.). This balcony (originally over the door of the old sacristy), jutting out on five massive consoles, shows in the simplicity of its decorative motives the influence of the antique, but no stronger than in many of the much older buildings of Tuscany, particularly the Baptistery and San Miniato, where Donatello probably made his first studies. But what seems to have engaged the artist's attention in Rome almost more than the antique—and this finds its expression conspicuously throughout the whole decorative scheme of the Cantoria—is the polychromatic ornamentation of the mediæval monuments with their coloured mosaics, and the mosaic pictures of the churches, far richer and on a more grandiose scale there than in his native city. Not only is the background of the reliefs filled with this multi-coloured glass mosaic, but the divisions between the larger ornaments; the two bronze heads (now missing) between the middle consoles stood out from coloured marble plaques, and everywhere gold originally completed this radiant mosaic decoration.

Not less peculiar and striking than the decoration is the architectonic structure of the two galleries. In that of the Duomo the five great consoles which form, as it were, part of the wall rest on a long narrow shelf and support a substantial marble slab, with an effective shell border, and above that the base of the balustrade is ornamented with a flat design of alternating palmetto leaves and cherub heads surrounded by a palmetto-like halo. Above each console this base projects somewhat to support two slender pillars cased in gold mosaic, behind which appears the relief with the dancing children, which, in its turn, serves to carry the high, slightly hollowed cornice forming the parapet of the gallery. This parapet, which curves slightly forward, is decorated on a mosaic ground with a band of upright leaves alternating with a slender vase. The lowest support of all is a flat socle with a frieze in low relief showing five cherubs' heads linked by thick garlands of leaves. The 'cheeks' of

the consoles are decorated with the favourite Donatellesque tendrils, both with and without vases. The whole effect is extraordinarily virile and picturesque, and must have shone out doubly brilliant in the dark position the work originally occupied. Such details as, judged by the set standard of classicism, may seem to us 'baroque,' are merely the outcome of an original genius which could achieve, or chose to achieve, its special object only by its own peculiar means.

Another Choir Gallery (Plate VII.) on the model of the one just described was ordered by Cosimo from Donatello for the church of S. Lorenzo. Here he has almost entirely avoided plastic ornament, but the decorative scheme is if anything richer, more delicately graceful and resplendent in colour. This gallery rests on six consoles almost exactly similar in shape and decoration to those we have already studied in the gallery of the Duomo. The panels between the middle consoles are filled in with coloured marble discs framed in mosaic, while the two end ones contain the escutcheon of the Medici supported by a *putto* who peeps out from behind it. The richly ornamented base of the consoles has first the characteristic band of alternating ovals and arrows, and above that a thick rope bound together at equal intervals, and—to judge by the treatment of the sides—designed to represent an interlying mat. This curious ornament, which we shall meet with again, was probably suggested to the artist by the frequent employment of ropes and mats in the setting up of sculptural works. The façade of the balcony is again adorned with elegant little pillars cased in mosaic, and behind them is a row of coloured stone panels alternating with small sham doors of inlaid marble surmounted by shells. The base on which the pillars stand is ornamented with Donatello's favourite band of pearls, and over that a very unusual design of palmetto leaves between wings. The entablature resting on the pillars consists of a cornice covered thickly with leaves, and of a slightly hollowed parapet curving out over the cornice and showing on a coloured mosaic background a design of pairs of dolphins holding a shell between them—the earliest example of the use of the dolphin in Renaissance decoration that I know of.

The Choir Gallery of S. Lorenzo was probably designed and carried out at the same time as another commission of Cosimo's, the decoration of the Sacristy. The Sacristy itself is of far less



Brogi

DONATELLO

CANTORIA

S. Lorenzo, Florence

Brogi

DONATELLO

JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES

Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence

importance to the question at present occupying us than is generally supposed, and yet the artist's ill-repute as a decorator rests almost entirely on his work there. Already Brunelleschi's biographer, Manetti, a younger contemporary of Donatello, tells us that Brunelleschi was so little satisfied with his old friend's work that they quarrelled about it. Seeing that the tendencies of the two artists were closely allied, this does not seem very probable, apart from the fact that Manetti's extravagant hero-worship makes him an unreliable authority. However, it is hardly possible to judge how far Brunelleschi may have had a certain measure of justification now that the colouring is entirely obliterated which, combined with the plastic decoration, must have lent an air of splendour to the apartment of which the present wash of white paint gives no hint.[1] What Brunelleschi probably disapproved of most[2] was the framework of the two bronze doors, and in truth, the unusually massive, rough-hewn pediments seem to encroach unduly on the modest outlines of Brunelleschi's architecture. On the other hand, the doors, each with its exquisite little group of two figures framed in the slender ornamentation favoured alike by Donatello and Brunelleschi, absolutely demand this low, massive, plain architrave to divide them from the huge space surrounding them in which

[1] The decoration was, however, not quite so multi-coloured as is generally assumed. As is still apparent on the two pairs of figures of the Saints over the doors, the clay reliefs were covered with a thin coating of yellowish stucco on which the gilding was laid, and the background was painted blue; obviously they were intended to represent marble reliefs. The same effect may be observed in the case of Verrocchio's clay relief from S. Maria Nuova, where, under the brown discoloration, the original marble paint as well as the gold design on the borders of the robes is still visible.

[2] The chief reason for their difference was perhaps a purely personal one. From Brunelleschi's *Denunzia de' Beni* as well as from Buggiano's for the year 1433 we learn that the former had in trust for his adopted son a sum of 200 gold florins, the remuneration for various works in marble, among which are mentioned an altar and a tomb commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici. That this altar was the ornate marble one in the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, C. von Fabriczy correctly surmised, but that he failed to recognise the tomb under the table of the Sacristy as that of Cosimo's parents was entirely due to a constantly repeated tradition, nowhere confirmed, that made it the work of Donatello. Yet this sarcophagus, by its clumsy outlines and its uncouth, bloated *putti*, is particularly characteristic of Buggiano's methods—strongly influenced by Donatello, certainly, whom Buggiano followed closely in those early days of his career. The rough construction of the Sacristy once finished, and the question of the inner decoration arising, it was only natural that Brunelleschi should have hastened to bring forward the claims of his adopted son. It was equally natural, however, that Cosimo, having in mind such mediocre results as the altar, should have passed over Buggiano and entrusted the work to Donatello at S. Lorenzo, who even by that time was unanimously accounted the first sculptor of Italy, and had already executed several important works for Cosimo.

they would otherwise be swallowed up. The clay reliefs of 'Saints Cosmas and Damian,' and 'Laurence and Stephen' over the doors are framed in Donatello's favourite slender tendril ornament rising out of tall vases. The tondi with the history of the saints on the ceiling are designed purely with regard to their effect as seen from a distance; the only point of architectural value is the lightly sketched Triumphal Arch in the very animated picture of the 'Martyrdom.' In the 'Evangelist' reliefs the plain rough shape and the ornaments of the seats and tables show the master's well-known characteristics: festoons and garlands of leaves, rosettes, vases, shells, cherubs, etc.

In this same period fall several commissions, likewise from Cosimo, which exhibit, beside the already familiar characteristics, new features in Donatello's decorative art. How simple, yet how effective and delicate, is his treatment of the ornamentation on his bronze statue of David, the chiselling of which seems for once to have been entirely Donatello's own handiwork. Specially interesting is the socle of the bronze group of 'Judith and Holofernes' (Plate VIII.) which originally crowned a fountain in a courtyard of the Palazzo Medici. Judith's robe is encrusted with embroideries such as the artist loved, with the characteristic motives we find on the sculptures. The bronze socle is very distinctive, in the first place, from its shape, which is triangular with smoothly rounded baluster posts at the corners. The very tasteful and striking marble base to Donatello's 'Marzocco' in the Palazzo Vecchio has the twisted pillars, which are more characteristic of the artist than the smooth ones. In addition to the curved grooving they are lavishly ornamented with scales, ovals, and similar designs, from which—and the style of the lion would tend to confirm this—the work may be classed as about contemporary with the 'Niche' of Orsanmichele. These pillars stand out too far from the narrow sides of the socle, the broad surfaces of which show the graceful lily of Florence in low relief framed in Donatello's favourite laurel wreath with fluttering ribbons, while round the pediment stand small shields with the devices of the separate districts of Florence and with the ribbon ornament. Similarly we find these posts supporting the pediment or the canopy in various Madonna reliefs which issued from Donatello's atelier. The socle of the 'Judith' group, indeed, is simply one powerful baluster post, which, in its

elegant and picturesque form, is particularly expressive of its function as weight bearer.[1]

Donatello achieves much the same effect as the baluster pillars by placing a couple of his slender vases foot to foot, as, for instance, in the setting of the remarkable Madonna relief in the Medici Chapel of S. Croce. And though this relief, like a number of similar Madonnas, the majority of which are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Louvre, and the Berlin Museum, can only be referred to some painstaking but unskilled pupil of Donatello's, yet the idea, the models, and the designs must assuredly be claimed for Donatello's own. Despite the superficial and often coarse execution, they all bear the distinguishing marks of the master. As regards the decoration, it is the same story, and this applies especially to the large relief in the Cappella Medici which certainly deserves the designation 'baroque,' even without the modern inscription plate let into the lower part. The employment of mosaic in the ornamentation and the background, the very unusual design of the framework (the inscription plate is flanked by child caryatides and has beneath it a couple of *putti* holding a wreath much in the style of the St. Peter's 'Ciborium'), the frieze of cherubs with garlands of fruit in the peculiar, slightly convex pediment of the actual relief—all this is characteristic of Donatello's picturesque methods.

[1] That this base is by Donatello, and therefore not a work of the time of the Revolution in 1495, when the group was removed from the Medici Palace to the front of the Palazzo Vecchio, and thence transferred soon after to the Loggia de' Lanzi and furnished with its monumental inscription, is proved by its peculiar shape and the style of decoration. On the other hand, I doubt if it was originally intended for the 'Judith.' Not only is this pedestal too small for the triangular socle which overlaps it at each corner, but the three water-holes are so placed that the water would fall on to the surface of the pedestal instead of spouting over it. Now the surface is not the least weather-stained, as must necessarily be the case if it had stood for half a century in the middle of a fountain, apart from the difficulty of imagining this tall, slender column in such a position at all. Was it not more probably designed by Donatello for his 'David,' and only used for the 'Judith' when these bronze figures were removed from the Medici Palace in 1495? Vasari, it is true, refers to a marble and bronze pedestal made by Desiderio for Donatello's 'David,' but that the statue stood on it in Vasari's day is no proof that it had always done so. Cosimo certainly never would have left this masterpiece for years without a pedestal, and Donatello would be sure to provide one himself from the first. Indeed, it is just Vasari who confirms this in another place, as C. von Fabriczy has pointed out to me. In his *Life of Bandinelli* (vol. vi. p. 144) he mentions a statue by Bandinelli for the courtyard of the Palazzo Medici, the clumsy pedestal of which he entrusted to the hand of Benedetto da Rovezzano 'non considerando lui l'ingegno di Donatello, il quale al Davitte, che v'era prima, aveva fatto una semplice colonna.' The 'Judith' stood in all probability on the granite fountain with the marble ornaments by Donatello—no longer in existence—which Vasari and others describe as being in the inner court of the Palazzo Medici.

Similar features, though not in such profusion, may be found in various other Madonna reliefs, the framework of which is unfortunately lost to us. Cherubim, with or without garlands of fruit, adorn the halos of one or two Madonnas in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Louvre, while in the bronze Madonna statue of the Duomo they form the actual crown (Plate XXVI.). The curious frieze of alternating palmettos and cherub-heads, as in the Choir Gallery of the Opera del Duomo (similarly too on the greaves of the 'Gattamelata' statue), occurs again in a small Madonna relief in the Berlin Museum. This relief shares with the closely allied Madonna in the Louvre and the early low relief of the 'Madonna with Saints and Angels' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Plate XXVIII.) the oval form employed at this period seemingly by Donatello alone. In the majority of these reliefs the Virgin is seated on a low folding-chair, the arms of which are ornamented with the familiar leaves or bold volutes and rosettes. In the voluminous drapery, the embroideries on the hem, shoulders, and breast of the robes, the jewels and other details, they all show more or less the well-known characteristics of the master.

The commissions for which Donatello was called to Padua, and which occupied him during the ten years he spent there, were of a grandiose and monumental nature. His assistants here were for the most part inferior workmen, some of whom he brought with him or sent for afterwards from Florence, others young Paduans whom he trained for the purpose, since he could not do without assistance in these extensive undertakings. Every detail of architecture or decoration is unquestionably of Donatello's designing,[1] notwithstanding the occasionally spiritless, even incorrect drawing, which of course must not be laid to his charge, but invariably to that of the assistants, who made the models after his designs, and carried out the casting and chiselling.

The equestrian statue of 'Gattamelata' (Plate IX.), in all essentials

[1] F. Wolff, in his study on Michelozzo, contests the right of these Paduan bronzes, 'the history of whose origin is extremely obscure,' to enter at all into the discussion of Donatello's architectural genius. 'It would appear,' he says (p. 25), 'that the employment of the *coulisse*-like architectural background in the reliefs in question is a special Lombardic or Paduan trait, seeing that it was so conspicuously used by the school of Squarcione'; and further on he repeats his praise of the 'architecturally gifted Upper Italian pupils of Donatello, who thought in terms of architecture, as the backgrounds of the reliefs in S. Antonio prove.' Nor has this discovery even the merit of novelty, for Willi Pastor, who, to judge by the motto on his book, also places himself under the ægis of M. Marcel Reymond, declared as far back as 1891, in

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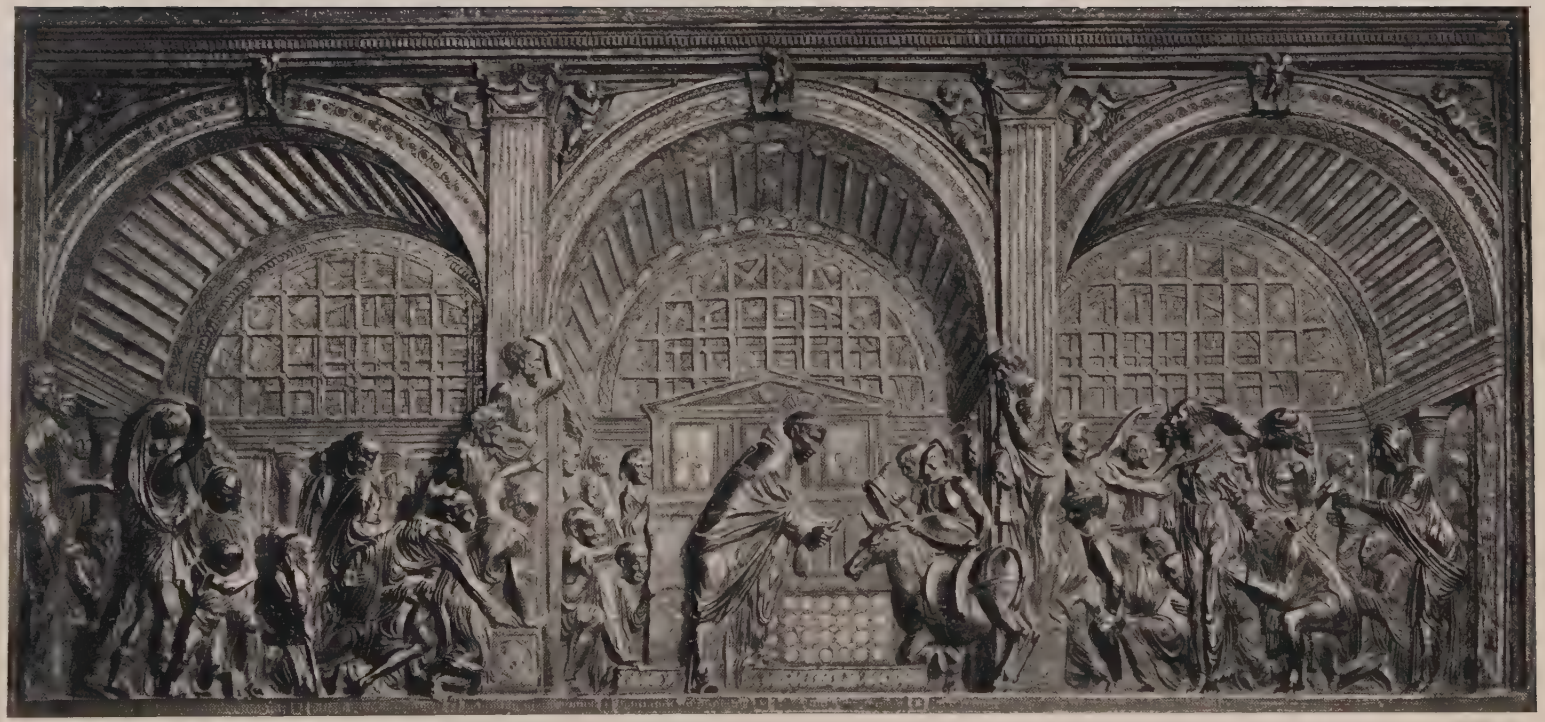
DONATELLO

GATTAMELATA MONUMENT

Piazza del Santo, Padua



Alinari

DONATELLO

THE MIRACLE OF THE ASS

Sant' Antonio, Padua

the master's own handiwork, is enriched chiefly with plastic ornament, such as the splendid Medusa on the breastplate and the charming *putti* on the ornate saddle. The socle too is very remarkable and particularly characteristic of Donatello's architectural tendencies. Its oval form, to begin with, is probably unique at that period; equally striking is the extreme simplicity of the pediment and the base, the two perfectly unadorned reliefs with *putti* holding escutcheons let in above the main pediment and the mock doors carved in the marble at each side of the middle portion of the actual pedestal, apparently to give the impression of its being the funereal vault of the hero thus commemorated.

The High Altar and the Tribuna in the Choir of S. Antonio must have been the most important architectonic productions of the artist's whole career; unfortunately they have not come down to us, not even in a drawing. Only the splendid choir-screens of red Veronese marble remain, whereon the vases and other ornaments bear clear witness to Donatello's hand. The bronze panel-reliefs with the playing and singing *putti* show on the narrow flat frames and in the background a design of gilded cords and garlands of leaves, while the panels with the 'Symbols of the Evangelists' and the 'Pietà' have a peculiar patterned background, partly polished and gilded, which has much the same effect as the coloured glass mosaic of his marble reliefs.

Among the reliefs of the altar the most important from our present point of view are the four larger panels depicting the 'Miracles of St. Anthony.' In these crowded scenes it was Donatello's first consideration to use the architectural background as a means of separating the wealth of figures into distinct groups, of deepening the perspective, and, at the same time, providing a suitably animated setting to the vivacious episodes depicted. He therefore places each of these scenes in the interior of some spacious building, which he fills with every description of architectural

his *Evolutionary Study on Donatello*, that in his relation to the Paduan schools Donatello was not the teacher, but rather had himself received instructions from Squarcione and other Paduan masters. The arguments on which Pastor bases his assertion and his whole protest against the 'Donatello cult' betray his limited knowledge of the subject, but it must be admitted that the young student supports his paradoxical theory—the suggestion probably of some professor or other—with ingenuity, occasionally indeed with brilliancy. The way in which Dr. Wolff simply echoes Pastor has no such extenuating merit, and deserves to be denounced for its glaring misstatements of perfectly self-evident facts.

accessory: beams and rafters in most varied perspective and foreshortening, unfinished walls showing the scaffolding and rough stone heaps, panelled ceilings, flights of steps, parapets, lattices, ladders—anything for the furtherance of his pictorial and dramatic scheme. The ornaments, which are of the simplest, and used over and over again, are still further removed from the classical models than those he employed in the works of the early twenties and thirties. Very occasionally only he will put in a more ornate classical detail, as in the 'Miracle of the Ass' (Plate x.), where the capitals of the two large pilasters have fabulous sea-monsters at the corners, and the spandrels of the arches are filled with trumpet-blowing *putti*. But the distinguishing mark of these edifices is their spaciousness and the beauty of their proportions. The three great niches in the background of the last-named relief betray, at a glance, their reminiscence of the Baths of Caracalla and the Constantine Basilica, and may surely be described as the most spacious and imposing example of architecture in the whole range of Italian sculpture or painting before Raphael's 'School of Athens.' The proportions, the wide planes, the pilasters with the pediment, the *putti* in the spandrels and on the keystones of the arches, the double bronze lattice at the back of the arches showing a glimpse beyond, and the altar in the centre niche, all combine to form one stupendous, homogeneous whole, quite apart from the effect produced by the scene in the foreground. Equally beautiful is the interior of the church in the 'Miracle of the Witnessing of the Child,' though the prevailing flatness of the architecture, the alternating wide and narrow arches, and similar extreme picturesque liberties make the practical realisation of such a building, to say the least of it, problematical. All of this applies in a still higher degree to the architectural setting of the 'Miracle of the Stony Heart of the Miser.'

After Donatello's return to his native city in 1453, there is only one important work to be considered as bearing on the question of the character and development of the artist's decorative style: the bronze pulpits in S. Lorenzo. Considering the incomplete state in which the artist left them, and that the panels were all more or less worked over and carried out by pupils, and after Donatello's death, they cannot be regarded as quite unassailable evidence. It is obvious in several of the panels (for instance, the 'Women at the Tomb,' the 'Outpouring of the Holy Spirit,' the double-relief of 'Christ

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DONATELLO

CHRIST BEFORE CAIAPHAS AND PILATE

South Pulpit, S. Lorenzo, Florence

before Pilate and before Caiaphas,' certain portions of the friezes, etc.) that some figures or even whole groups were only hastily sketched in wax, and afterwards either cast just as they stood, or the wax models first worked up in a more or less unskilled fashion by some pupil. As a convincing example of this you have only to look at the figures in the background of the 'Crucifixion.'

Though most of the panels were still incomplete, the pulpit on the south side was the furthest advanced at Donatello's death; the other was modelled on it afterwards as best might be. The former is the finer of the two, particularly in its bold and beautifully designed pediment. The artist goes the length of presenting the scenes exactly as if on the stage, dividing them off by low 'wings' seen in perspective, a consequence of his marked leanings towards pictorial methods, wherein there is no denying he oversteps the limits of the permissible. The decoration on the upper portion of the pediment of the pulpit on the north side shows an interesting variation of the classical motive of alternating sirens and palmetto leaves. The models for separate portions of this pulpit were probably prepared by the master—certain of them even cast by him, but not chiselled. On the other hand, the repetition of the frieze with the *putti* on the southern pulpit was decidedly not in the original scheme; it must have been merely a makeshift of the pupils, who are also to blame for the unsightly omission of a slab beneath this frieze. The reliefs on the north pulpit are separated by grooved pilasters, the capitals of which are furnished with a couple of *putti* holding a garland of leaves. Features of special interest in the various reliefs are the hall with its beautiful panelled roof in which the 'Martyrdom of St. Laurence' is placed, the pillared hall of the Campo Santo in the 'Women at the Tomb,' and, in the double-relief of 'Christ before Caiaphas and Pilate' (Plate XI.), the stately barrel-vaulted courts with a view into a pillared hall, closed at the back with a grating and having a balcony. More unrestrainedly here than even in the S. Antonio panels do the artist's pictorial tendencies dominate the whole scheme of architecture and decoration. At the same time the double-relief is very markedly reminiscent of the master's Roman days, not only in the architecture, but equally so in the three youthful winged figures on pedestals in front of the pilasters; there is something purely classical in the studied attitudes and repose of these statues. Two of the pedestals on which they stand are grooved in spirals, while the third is

decorated all round with reliefs in the style of the Trajan column and the capitals shaped like baskets.

Here again, either in hasty sketch or rough coarse work of inexperienced pupils, we must laboriously piece together Donatello's real intention. By great good luck there has come down to us a large-sized, perfectly authenticated and comparatively finished sketch by Donatello by which we are enabled to interpret the artist's original intention as regards the double-relief, besides possessing in it an invaluable illustration of the architectonic methods of the master in this his latter period. This is an uncoloured clay model in the Victoria and Albert Museum of the 'Flagellation and Crucifixion' (Plate XII.), having in its framework the arms of Florence and of the *Arte della Lana*, while on the right of the predella is the escutcheon of the Forzori family and on the left the profile portrait of a young man, probably the founder. Judging from this, the model would seem to be that for a monument to be erected by one of the Forzori in some church in Florence but never carried out, possibly because of the death of the artist; for the work proclaims itself at every point as dating from the closing years of the master's life. The affinity with the double-relief of the north pulpit is so great that Hans Semper, who alone mentions it, definitely regarded it as the sketch for the pulpit relief, wherein, however, certain differences in the grouping, the coats of arms, and the framework prove him to be mistaken. The figures being comparatively small and only slightly raised, though of great delicacy and finish, the vaulted halls appear all the loftier. A railing in the foreground, spears, torches and the like serve the artist repeatedly as a means for deepening the perspective effect. The two arches are crowned by a pediment ornamented with a light palmetto frieze and supported on half-pillars, a motive, like the vaulting, taken almost direct from the antique. The elegant composite capitals show a peculiar and tasteful decoration. In the spandrels are the youthful winged figures we have noticed in a like position before, and on the keystones again the gaily poised *putti*; flying *putti* adorn the socle, supporting shells with the escutcheon and the small profile portrait, while others hold garlands beneath.

Apart from its high artistic value this relief is of interest in that it shows us how far the artist considered it necessary to work up the sketch his assistants were to carry out. Figures and architecture are mostly complete though only sketched in, but such ornaments as are

DONATELLO

THE FLAGELLATION AND THE CRUCIFIXION

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

repeated—the palmetto frieze, the capitals, and so forth—are only worked out in one place, otherwise merely roughly indicated. That each of the several assistants who had the carrying out of the design—one the model, another the casting, a third and fourth the chasing and gilding of the bronze—departed further and further from the original conception is plainly demonstrated by a comparison of this sketch with the panels of the bronze pulpit, and even, in parts, with the reliefs in the Santo.[1]

In all these works, as diverse as they are numerous, which may confidently be ascribed to him alone, Donatello proves himself the great creative artist who pointed out the paths in which the art of the Renaissance was to walk. An artist of such boundless imagination, such strength of composition and inexhaustible creative power as Donatello, must of necessity also be architecturally gifted: it is the natural outcome of the other peculiarities of his plastic genius, and he was ever pouring his exuberant conceptions into fresh moulds. Engaging from the first in plastic art, to which he devoted himself not by preference like Michelangelo, but almost exclusively—though now and then he calls himself a goldsmith or a painter—he gives abundant evidence in his sculptures of the architectonic and pictorial sides of his comprehensive genius, only, however, in the degree appropriate to the particular work on hand. He had just as much feeling for grand dimensions and wide spacial effects as for architectonic detail, but, according to the requirements of the work, he lays special stress now on the one, now on the other side, here lightly sketched in, there worked out with elaborate care, sometimes only bold and sweeping lines, at others the most ornate and varied details applied often in an extraordinarily original manner, as I have described in the foregoing pages. Just as from the sculptor's point of view he carefully studied the antique, and applied, even

[1] I have refrained from mentioning among Donatello's works the Fontana Pazzi. This fountain, long exhibited by that family in the court of the Bargello, has been for the last fifteen years in the possession of the antiquary Bardini in Florence, while a portion of the pedestal in the shape of a low vase was acquired about thirty years ago by the painter Tricca and is now for sale by another dealer. Both in its structure and rich decoration this great marble fountain has the closest affinity with the one taken from the Villa Castello and now in the new hall of the Palazzo Pitti, which Vasari and others attribute to Antonio Rossellino, whereas the same biographers describe the Pazzi fountain as the work of Donatello. As, however, it is neither in form nor ornamentation (with the exception perhaps of the tendrils in the triangular base) particularly characteristic of Donatello, I would point out that Albertini expressly mentions it as the work of Antonio Rossellino, a fact which a comparison with the fountain now in the Palazzo Pitti would go far to confirm.

directly copied it in his works as no other sculptor of the Renaissance did, and yet remained the most independent artist previous to Michelangelo, so he studied classical architecture but applied his knowledge in an absolutely individual manner. Heinrich von Geymüller describes Donatello as 'a most remarkable and independent genius; more particularly in respect of his architectonic conceptions and individual point of view. The vast and ponderous or the delicately detailed were equally within his compass when he chose to apply himself seriously to the task.' From the pedantic point of view there was much ground for adverse criticism in this respect, but as a man and an artist it was impossible not to consider his tectonic decoration far more pleasing and sympathetic than the more strictly correct performance of some professed architect.

In Michelozzo now we have one such strictly correct architect, if we construct for ourselves a picture of the artist out of the works executed by him alone. And this we must do if we are to come to any conclusion on the vexed question as to what is the joint work of Michelozzo and Donatello, and what is to be ascribed to one or other separately.

Michelozzo di Bartolommeo, Donatello's junior by some ten years, and like him trained as a goldsmith and a sculptor, worked first under Ghiberti, whom he assisted in the execution of the first bronze door, the statue of 'St. Matthew,' and the reliefs for the font in Siena. When the Baptistery door (Plate XIII.) was finished, all but the gilding—1423 at latest—he began to work for Donatello, for whom he undertook the first bronze casting, namely the statue of 'St. Louis,' upon which Donatello was engaged in 1423; in the same year, probably the 'St. John the Baptist' statuette for the Duomo in Orvieto, and about 1425 the 'Salome' relief for the font in San Giovanni in Siena. About 1425 the assistant was promoted to be Donatello's fellow-worker, henceforth sharing with him the same atelier and entering into a regular partnership which lasted till 1433, when, apart from the completion of commissions already entered into, it must have been dissolved. Consequently, till his connection with Donatello, Michelozzo had never been officially recognised as an architect, and had actually worked as one only in a subordinate position. What he may have learned in that branch from Ghiberti, say in the erection of the 'St. Matthew' niche — though his assistance in it is doubtful—could only be in the transition style.

Brogi

LORENZO GHIBERTI

BRONZE DOORS

BAPTISTERY, FLORENCE

Alinari

MICHELOZZO

MONUMENTAL EFFIGY OF BARTOLOMMEO ARAGAZZI

When we meet Michelozzo as an independent worker—1435 at the earliest—he is already an active champion of Renaissance architecture; nevertheless he so readily makes concessions—particularly when working out of Florence—to local or individual taste, that in such edifices the Gothic element is still to the fore. About the middle of the thirties Michelozzo is appointed court architect to the Medici, and is almost exclusively occupied in that capacity till the death of Cosimo. In 1437 Cosimo began at his own expense the building of the monastery of San Marco, and the Cappella Medici in S. Croce[1] cannot have been begun earlier than about this time. In all these structures simplicity is the prevailing characteristic of the decorations, the familiar Roman designs, the band of ovals, the festoon, the 'pipes,' the ribbon; the Corinthian, Ionic and composite capitals appearing in their purest antique form. Far more seldom than either Brunelleschi or Donatello does he introduce ornaments taken from the Florentine Proto-Renaissance. Figural ornament is rarely employed, and then only *putti* as supporters of an escutcheon in the gable of a porch, or cherub heads between garlands in a frieze. While Donatello, from whom the other artist borrows the design, invariably provides his cherub heads with wings, Michelozzo's have none, and the garlands which the former makes simply of leaves with maybe a few flowers in the middle, the younger artist invariably composes of quantities of fruit with a few leaves and flowers gracefully bound together.

About 1444 Michelozzo undertakes the completion of the Annunziata, in 1446 he becomes director of the Cathedral building, and in 1447-48 he erected for Piero de' Medici the graceful 'Tabernacle of the Holy Cross' in San Miniato. Not till 1444 (not 1435 as has hitherto been assumed) does he start upon the palace of Cosimo de' Medici,[2] which effectually disposes of all discussion as to his priority over Brunelleschi as a Renaissance palace-builder. Where the decoration is more ornate than on the great 'Tabernacle,' or, more correctly, the canopy of the 'Annunciation,' it must, I think, be put down to Pagno di Lapo, who carried out the designs, and who was long an assistant in the workshop which Donatello and Michelozzo shared in common. But in this case too, as in the

[1] The richly sculptured door between the first and second courts of S. Croce has nothing to do with Michelozzo.

[2] This date is deduced from the statement of a contemporary which Dr. Warburg discovered in the National Library at Florence.

still more elegant and obviously somewhat later baldachins of the Impruneta, which, judging from their strong similarity, were probably carried out by Pagno assisted by Luca della Robbia after Michelozzo's designs, we find almost exclusively classical ornamentation. This may be said, too, in general of the later works of the artist out of Florence: of the Medici Bank in Milan, erected after 1457; the chapel, built about 1462 by the Portinari (the representatives of the Medici in Milan) in S. Eustorgio on the pattern of the Medici chapel; and in some degree, too, for his share in the façade of the Council Hall of Ragusa, in which town the artist was living in 1464. However, just in these works local influence is very apparent in the decoration side by side with Michelozzo's characteristic elements. Thus, while in Ragusa Venetian stone-cutters carried out his designs, in Milan he had Lombard 'marmisti,' besides a very capable assistant or foreman who, to judge by his treatment of the *putti*, must have had intimate connections with Donatello's workshop.

Let us now consider the works which each artist executed separately, and the monuments of which there is documentary proof that they carried them out together. In the *Denunzia de' Beni* of 1427, the most reliable record of the connection between the two artists, both declare unanimously that they practise their art *insieme e a compagnia* and Michelozzo gives the further detail that 'in the two years or so of their partnership they turned out the following works': the tomb of Cardinal Baldassare Coscia for San Giovanni in Florence, a tomb for Cardinal Rinaldo Brancacci which is at Naples, and at Montepulciano a tomb for Bartolommeo Aragazzi, as also a marble statue for the Duomo at Florence. Donatello puts down a separate claim for 180 florins for a relief on the font at Siena, of which he says '*lo feci più tempo fa*,' and of which he is always named as the sole author, except in a letter of May 1427 asking for a part payment and signed by both *compagni*. Now from this letter, and for reasons of *Stilkritik*, but in opposition to Donatello's own statement, the design for the bronze relief of the 'Salome' has recently been credited in part or wholly to Quercia, or to Michelozzo who cast it, and in addition Ghiberti's influence has been discovered in it. As Donatello received the full remuneration of 180 florins for the panels—the same sum as arranged for with Quercia, who, as we know, had first undertaken the work—

there can be no doubt whatever that he carried out the commission from the very first. Now Donatello as we know him, not only as he speaks to us from his works, but as he is unanimously and definitely characterised by his contemporaries and biographers and in various documents, would have been the last man in the world to carry out the designs of another artist. That the 'Dance of Salome' can owe nothing to Quercia is manifest, considering that in the architectural forms of his backgrounds—when he uses any, which is but seldom—he is scarcely beyond Giotto, and arranges his figures as much as possible on one plane. Far more likely is it that in the relief panels of the font, Quercia was influenced by Donatello rather than he by Quercia, especially as Quercia was the last of the two to hand in the completed work.

Though the design of this relief might reasonably be laid to the credit of the great Quercia, its attribution or even that of any essential part in it to Michelozzo is quite incomprehensible. It abounds in just those qualities in which that artist is lacking: the masterly grouping, the lively and dramatic representation of the climax of an episode, the highly developed realism, the pictorial disposition of the figures and treatment of the relief, the striving after perspective effects, the spacial deepening and vivacious treatment of the distances, which we find still further developed in the bronze reliefs of the Santo in Padua, the bronze pulpits of S. Lorenzo, and in many other examples of Donatello's work—all those characteristics which are so marked in Donatello and show him here to be already at the zenith of his powers. If certain peculiarities—say in the folds of the drapery and the somewhat formal modelling of the heads noticeable in a number of Donatello's works at this period—recall Michelozzo, it is simply because he got his training by carrying out Donatello's designs. And yet there are those who would make the young assistant, who as yet had never accomplished any independent work, responsible for the most finished productions of his master—make Donatello indebted to his apprentice for the full development of his artistic powers! No, it was as assistant to the great masters Ghiberti, Donatello, and Luca della Robbia that Michelozzo learned to be a sculptor; under their shadow the graceful plant developed that always needed some supporting stem round which to twine. Where he stands alone and unaided, therefore, he frequently appears conspicuously weak

both in architectonic composition and in the detail; for instance in S. Marco and in the Cappella Medici beside S. Croce.

The Siena bronzes were not the first works cast by Michelozzo for Donatello; their first joint work was probably the bronze statue of 'St. Louis' ordered from Donatello in 1418 for Orsanmichele, but now placed in an almost invisible position in the interior of S. Croce above the main door. The statue was finished and delivered in 1424 or 1425. It is of interest in the question at present under discussion, because the crook of the bishop's crozier is a piece of goldsmith's work conceived already on almost pure Renaissance lines. The records mention Donatello's name alone; Ghiberti tells us, however, that he had an assistant. Not that we are therefore justified in assuming that Michelozzo—whom we can only surmise to be the assistant alluded to by Ghiberti's vague notice—should have designed or executed this ornament, even if the remarkable individuality and the plastic style did not point so clearly to Donatello's hand. The termination of the pastoral staff, the crook[1] of which is unfortunately broken off, is in the form of a slender round *tempietto* with four shallow niches in which stand *putti* holding escutcheons. The base is supported on four narrow consoles adorned with foliage, while the narrow but richly moulded entablature is surmounted by a conical ornament decorated with a scale design. The *putti* already show strong affinity with the charming angel statuettes of a few years later on the Siena font. It just happens that we possess a similar crozier by Michelozzo, but dating ten or fifteen years later: the crozier of St. Augustine over the porch of S. Agostino in Montepulciano. This has a very similar head, but is conventional and commonplace, and gives the staff the appearance rather of a club than a crozier. As, from participation in these works Michelozzo, so from another mentioned in the *Denunzia de' Beni* must Donatello be entirely excluded, namely, the Aragazzi tomb at Montepulciano (Plate XIV.). For this monument a payment was first made in 1427 for providing marble; in a new contract with the heirs of Bartolommeo Aragazzi it was handed over altogether to Michelozzo, who up till its com-

[1] But it may be supplied from the crozier on the tomb of Bishop Pecci in the Duomo at Siena. This displays at the tip of its bold curve a joyous *putto*, much like one of those round the cover of the Siena font, of which there is a replica among the bronzes of the Bargello.

pletion, and after, alone received the payments. The architectural framework of the monument having been unfortunately destroyed on its removal from the chapel expressly erected for it by Michelozzo, it affords but little material for our study from the architectonic-decorative side, but all the more for judging of Michelozzo's creative powers. The grave and stately figures, noble of feature and correct in proportion, so classical in pose and drapery, have no affinity with Donatello's art (though in a way deriving from it) nor with that of any other artist of his day. On the other hand, they show in the bold relief, in the drapery, in the conception, and at times even in subject (the relief representing the farewell of the relatives to the deceased), a sympathy with the antique beyond any contemporary sculptor—a characteristic trait which we shall meet with again in Michelozzo, the architect. These figures are indeed lacking in spirituality and animation, and therefore the artist fails completely when he tries to depict a scene from life, as in the 'Farewell' just mentioned, and the relief with the 'Adoration of the Virgin Enthroned.' These sculptures enable us to recognise as Michelozzo's a number of stately Madonna reliefs in clay and marble for the most part removed from their original position. But they also show us that in the sculptures on the tomb of Cardinal Brancacci in S. Angelo a Nilo at Naples, an order received by both Donatello and himself, Michelozzo was the chief worker. With the exception of the sarcophagus with the small bas-relief of the 'Assumption of the Virgin,' which proclaims itself at a glance to be a consummate example of Donatello's own handiwork, all the figures and reliefs exhibit the same traits as the sculptures of the Aragazzi tomb. Such small deviations as may occur must doubtless be attributed to the different hands which Michelozzo was obliged to employ in the simultaneous production of such extensive monuments. And the proof of this is the marked superiority of his clay modelling over almost anything he did in marble.

As the figural part of the monument is obviously in the main the work of Michelozzo, it is highly probable that the architectural and decorative portion also belongs to him, with the exception, perhaps, of the motive of the beautiful triumphal arch. A comparison with his authenticated works seems to me to establish this beyond a doubt. The grooved columns and pilasters with composite capitals, the slender double pilasters, the meagre ornamentation,

all with a strong reminiscence of the Roman antique, have nothing of Donatello's impress but much of Michelozzo's, though in a hesitating, tentative fashion, for here we have one of his earlier productions of the kind. Further indicative of Michelozzo's manner, as familiar to us from the Medici Chapel in S. Croce, in Milan and Ragusa, is the fact that the whole structure with the figures supporting the sarcophagus harks back to the lines of the mediæval local art of Naples. The architecture does not strike me as being so unimpeachable as it is popularly considered. The architecture is commonplace, the composition in many respects inharmonious, if not altogether at fault, and the separate component parts have often no clear *raison d'être*. The columns are too slender, and too tall for the light weight they have to support, the great pillars at the back are superfluous and clumsily intersected by the sarcophagus, the double pilasters above the columns are meaningless, are too close together and disfigured by the triviality of the decoration. The superstructure, in the shape of a Gothic arch, is, moreover, particularly unpleasing. This may have been a concession to the Gothic style still prevalent at that time in Naples, particularly in the florid, overladen monumental tombs; but Donatello would assuredly never have made such a concession.[1] Yet ten years later we see Michelozzo repeating this arch almost exactly in a structure which Schmarsow has, with every good reason, assigned to him above the porch in Montepulciano. In this façade, which in other respects, too, bears the impress of Michelozzo's work, the row of niches in the upper story is pointed Gothic. The clay figures over the porch of the 'Madonna between St. Augustine and the Baptist,' on the other hand, are most pleasing and thoroughly distinctive pieces from the artist's own hand.

The tomb-monument of Pope John XXIII. (Coscia) (Plate XV.) in the Baptistery in Florence differs considerably from the Brancacci monument, and to its advantage, though the rich plastic decoration shows unmistakable evidence of the two hands. The wonderful recumbent figure, the admirable casting and chiselling of which is Michelozzo's work, with its bold composition and noble attitude

[1] The close affinity with the earlier tomb-monuments of Naples makes it wellnigh certain that the sculptors—to whom these tombs were unfamiliar—received a sketch-plan from Naples for the purpose. This may well have damped Donatello's interest in the work from the outset.

Brogi

DONATELLO AND MICHELOZZO

TOMB OF POPE JOHN XXIII (COSCIA)

Baptistery, Florence

Brogi

DONATELLO AND MICHELOZZO

OUTDOOR PULPIT

of quiet repose, and the beautiful disposition of the drapery, so far transcend the figures on the Brancacci and Aragazzi tombs (which resemble each other closely) that for that reason alone it can only be by Donatello. For is this not the most admirable monumental figure of the Quattrocento on which the noble statue of the State Secretary Bruni by Bernardo Rossellino was modelled? Equally unmistakable is the authorship of the two charming *putti* on the sarcophagus holding the scroll with the inscription, from whom, as is well known, Leonardo took his Christ Child in the 'Virgin of the Rocks.' The three relief figures of the 'Virtues,' the Madonna relief, and the almost flat cherubim between fruit festoons on the socle are, on the other hand, clearly recognisable as Michelozzo's work. In type, attitude, and drapery they correspond completely with others which we know for certain to be his, and if, with the exception of the somewhat commonplace socle frieze, they are more carefully and artistically worked out than those, it is due to Donatello's designing and superintendence.

The architecture of this tomb is extraordinarily interesting. There is scarcely a single ornament on it; the capitals of the flat-grooved pilasters are quite subordinated, and, in the main, modelled on the pattern of the old capitals of the Baptistery. Still simpler are the bunches of leaves on the volutes of the consoles, which are entirely characteristic of Donatello, though Michelozzo on occasion borrows the design. The architectural part of the monument is designed with consummate regard for its appointed position. Beside the massive antique columns, with their rich Corinthian capitals which frame it on either side, any ornament would have appeared trivial; the artist has therefore relied for effect on dignity of proportion and outline, and has fulfilled the task in a masterly manner. As the columns with the entablature already formed a species of niche, he filled in the back wall with an immense marble slab which terminates above in a straight elaborately moulded cornice and below in a high socle. In the middle, built as a protruding portion of the wall, is the plain socle-like sarcophagus, above which, on a bier supported by lion-headed props, is the recumbent figure of the deceased pontiff in rich archiepiscopal vestments. Bold horizontal lines, in part with strong shadow effects, form a skilfully calculated contrast to the straight and massive columns on either side, which are again effectively, though less conspicuously, employed in the

shallow niches behind the relief figures of the 'Virtues' and in the flat moulding of the wall behind the portrait figure. The semicircle above, containing the bas-relief half-length figure of the Madonna against a ray-like background, and the rich marble canopy curtain hanging from a bronze ring in the moulding and caught up against the sides of the columns, afford among the many horizontal and vertical lines of the monument the necessary relieving contrast, and heighten the whole effect, which must have been still more splendid with the original gilding and colouring.

We may look in vain among Michelozzo's buildings and monuments for an analogous work. Michelozzo would never have had the courage to break away so recklessly from the set rules of architecture. His edifices are for the most part dignified and more or less thorough and workmanlike productions, but it is impossible to credit him either with originality or imagination—not even in the Medici Palace. And these are precisely the qualities which strike us so forcibly in the framework and architectonic backgrounds of a series of works by Donatello—sometimes, no doubt, carelessly or only lightly sketched in, often 'baroque' in style, but invariably in the highest degree original and admirably adapted to the purpose and nature of the various monuments. The design of the Coscia tomb must therefore indubitably be assigned to Donatello.

The last important commission undertaken by Donatello and Michelozzo conjointly is the famous marble pulpit at the south-west corner of the façade of the Duomo at Prato (Plate XVI.). The contract was signed in 1428 in Prato by Michelozzo in his own and Donatello's name. The 'Opera del Duomo' discussed several special details, wherein mention is made of a model which was probably laid before them by the artists. The execution of the work lingered on for a considerable time; both sculptors were bound by previous commissions and repeatedly absent for long periods. At last, in 1434, a fresh contract was made with Donatello and in 1438 the great work was completed. It is not difficult to see from the contract which of the partners is looked upon as the dominant one. When Donatello had gone to Rome and his return was put off from month to month, the *Operai* addressed themselves to Cosimo, and sent the ablest of Donatello's assistants to Rome; whereas, when a year later Michelozzo was absent for some time, Donatello concluded alone the new contract of 1434, which leaves him a completely free hand in

the choice of assistants (*Donatum et alios*). A few months later, however, Michelozzo is at work on it again, and both sculptors are paid together till the completion of the work. That, as regards the plastic ornament, the seven panels with the dancing and playing angels belong to Donatello, there can be no doubt. The question as to how much of the actual execution is his own and how much the work of assistants, and who those assistants were, need not occupy us here,[1] as Michelozzo's hand is certainly not recognisable in it. That any one should have thought to find evidences of it in the far-famed bronze capital which supports the pulpit is hard to understand. The statement in one of the accounts respecting payment for the ironwork of the capital, with the additional remark, '*che fece Michelozzo*,' refers, of course, to the casting and chasing, because the payment for the modelling-wax is always made out to the two sculptors conjointly, Donatello's name being invariably put first. But the capital itself bears the strongest witness to Donatello. The whole conception—the animation of the decorative scheme by the various *putti*, their form, attitude, and charming liveliness (compare, for instance, the boy-angels on the corners with the very similar little figure in the double-relief on one of the S. Lorenzo pulpits, again in one of the bronze reliefs of the Santo at Padua, etc.), the tendrils, the formation of the leaves, blossoms, garlands, and ribbons, also the singular volutes, the striking difference of size in the *putti* (the ten figures are of no less than four different sizes)—all this is as markedly characteristic of Donatello as it is remote from the methods of Michelozzo or any other recognised architect.

Even those who hold a brief for Michelozzo (who is considered to have materially assisted Donatello in even architectural and decorative undertakings) allow this capital to be Donatello's work, but that the design and execution of the pulpit as a whole should be attributed to Michelozzo is with them an article of faith. But I

[1] It is my opinion that we have been going too far lately in attributing so considerable a part in the execution of Donatello's marble sculptures to his workmen. The artist never failed to adapt his figures and relief to their appointed positions; they consequently exhibit, even when designed for a great height, not only perspective foreshortening, but more or less sketchy, decorative treatment. This also applies to the marble reliefs of the Prato pulpit, which, despite the coarse and hasty workmanship and even occasional faultiness, are handled with a skilled assurance which precludes the idea of a 'prentice hand. From a document published by Guasti we learn that Donatello had already completed the first of these reliefs three weeks after signing the contract in Prato, and according to the account of the Cathedral organist, '*dicono tutti gl' intendenti per una bocca, che mai si vide simile storia.*'

ask, can that artist show among all his authenticated productions a single one that in imaginative power, beauty of proportion and outline, and consummate finish in every detail even distantly approaches this pulpit? On the other hand, all these qualities are so entirely characteristic of Donatello, and the employment here of rich and varied ornament is as appropriate and effective as is its omission on other monuments by Donatello, the Papal tomb in particular. In certain details of these ornaments the hand of Michelozzo and of Pagno di Lapo is no doubt apparent,[1] whereas in the architectural portions, such as the great capital that supports the baldachin, and in the moulding of the doors with their low arches resting on volutes, Donatello is again to the fore. Of the utmost importance in the question of the authorship of this pulpit, and also for the subject of the appearance of the fully developed Renaissance style in architecture, is the publication of the records concerning the niche for Donatello's statue of 'St. Louis' in Orsanmichele (Plate XVII.). This *chef d'œuvre* of the Italian Early Renaissance was hitherto dated about the middle of the century, and Donatello's authorship persistently denied. In the records with which Franceschini was already acquainted, and lately published by C. von Fabriczy,[2] Donatello is expressly named as the author, and its completion in 1425 assured. In a note by Ghiberti respecting the price of the statue which was to occupy the niche, Donatello is designated as the

[1] As to the true position of Pagno Portigiani as an artist, a question which is of interest to us from his participation in a number of the most important productions of Donatello and Michelozzo, we are as yet almost completely in the dark. The Madonna relief in the Opera del Duomo at Florence, which in Vasari's opinion may with some probability be ascribed to him, is a painstaking but insignificant piece of work, reminiscent neither of Donatello nor of Michelozzo. There is documentary proof of his authorship of the tomb of the Florentine physician, Giovanni Chellini, in S. Jacopo at S. Miniato. This monument is much disfigured by modern restoration, but the figure bears the closest relationship to Michelozzo's works of a like nature; the attenuated ornament, on the other hand, is that of the advanced Renaissance, and shows only here and there that it owes its origin to Donatello. The small Madonna in the pediment corresponds with one frequently met with in stucco which reveals the hand of an able follower of Donatello. As the original composition of this Madonna, whose author I take to be the young Luca della Robbia, was not designed in the round, and has been fitted with difficulty into the wreath, it was certainly never designed for this position, but was probably copied by Portigiani from some other sculptor if, in any case, it was he who placed it there.

[2] Cf. *Jahrbuch der K. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1900, p. 242 *et seq.* Since then the question has been briskly debated. Through a mistaken reading of the documents the niche is indeed left to Donatello, but its origin assigned to the year 1463. It has even been urged that the statue is too big for the niche, apparently in consequence of an error in measurement.

Brogi

DONATELLO

NICHE, CONTAINING VERROCCHIO'S CHRIST AND ST. THOMAS

Orsanmichele, Florence

LORENZO GHIBERTI

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS

Museum, Berlin

sculptor, but the immediate addition, '*e chi ha lavorato con lui*,' points to an assistant in whom, at any rate for the casting of the bronze figure and the carrying out of the niche, we may doubtless recognise Michelozzo. To what extent now did Michelozzo participate in the creation of this niche? Those who claim for him both design and execution of the Prato pulpit do the same in the case of the niche, and place Michelozzo in respect of period and importance among the first and most initiative masters of the Renaissance. Why Donatello, who alone received the commission, should have consented to be ousted by his young assistant; stranger still, why the commissioners should have acquiesced in this substitution, is not explained. However, what we have said about the pulpit applies equally to this niche; it is so original, so imposing, fitted to its purpose, and is fine in decoration beyond any authentic work of Michelozzo's, whereas it entirely coincides with all we know of Donatello's style. The masks at the corners of the socle (similar to those on the capitals of the 'Annunciation' tabernacle), the relief with the 'Trinity,' the bas-relief angels in the spandrels of the arches, the angel with the wreath, the thick matlike pad between the socle and the consoles, are all thoroughly characteristic of Donatello, while the dignified and imposing design and admirable decoration of the niche are worthy of the very highest praise. The Gothic tendency of the composition and execution of the ornaments, particularly of the leaves under the consoles, reveals the early date of the work. Herein and in the choice of ornament this niche claims relationship with the pulpit of S. Maria Novella erected shortly before. Let it be remembered that in the tabernacle of the altar of the Madonna in Impruneta Michelozzo employs the very same design, and a comparison between the two will reveal such a vast difference that the idea of their being the work of one and the same master cannot be entertained for a moment. In this small replica, erected some thirty years later, the composition is not happily managed and the details are in part incongruous; I need only draw attention to the socle with the masks, the flat pediment, the canopy, etc.

In what estimation this monument was held in its time is proved in the most eloquent manner (and to my knowledge this has not been remarked upon before) by the free reproduction of the niche by Masaccio in his fresco painted about 1426 on the inner wall of

S. Maria Novella. Moreover, the date of the completion and erection of the niche is hereby confirmed.

To sum up the result of our investigations, then, we find that Michelozzo, till his alliance with Donatello, had never worked independently, but only as an assistant to Ghiberti in his bronze work; his training as an architect he got from Donatello. Hence to Donatello alone must be ascribed the designing of the monuments for which they received the joint commission, except where, as in the case of the Aragazzi and probably most of the Brancacci tomb, it can be proved either from the records or the definite style that the work was relegated to the younger partner. Michelozzo will better bear comparison with Donatello in his feeling for space and skilful use of decoration, while in finish and detail he often exhibits a delicate fancy and charm far beyond any other architect of his time. It is true that Donatello is very frequently hasty and careless, but that is because he was ever striving to catch and put into plastic shape the pictures of his teeming imagination. This part of the work he readily leaves to some one else; during his connection with Michelozzo, therefore, to him. To Michelozzo, then, we may safely give the credit of having worked up and finished in the style of the classical Renaissance various of the most considerable of Donatello's designs, whereas other assistants have not unfrequently handed them on to us in a distorted and garbled form.

II

THE MADONNA IN FLORENTINE SCULPTURE OF THE RENAISSANCE

JACOB BURCKHARDT, in his *Contributions to the History of Art in Italy*, published after his death, says: 'If one would wish thoroughly to realise the value of one great and constant task set before the art of any one nation and period, he can have no more striking illustration than the representation of the Madonna and Saints in the Italy of the Fifteenth Century.' And this applies in a still wider sense to the Madonna cult as a whole and throughout the period of the Renaissance. By that means the Renaissance in Italy worked its way out to freedom and a clear-eyed view of Nature; therein the most delicate and varied grades of emotion found adequate expression. Hence the development of the representation of the Madonna provides a standard for the development of the whole of the Italian Renaissance art. It takes place during the Quattrocento, chiefly in Florence, and sculpture takes the lead; by the end of the fifteenth century it is transferred to Padua and Venice, and in the sixteenth century it finds its fullest expression in painting.

Vasari mentions a 'Madonna with Saints' by Masaccio which from his description must have closely resembled the Madonna compositions of the Later Renaissance, even the music-making angels on the steps of the throne are not wanting. Unfortunately the picture no longer exists, but two other pictures by this artist of the same subject help us to form some idea of it. The pictures referred to are 'The Virgin and Child with St. Anne' in the Accademia at Florence and the Madonna in the 'Adoration of the Magi' in the Berlin Gallery: the predella picture to the lost 'Madonna enthroned with Saints' in Pisa which Vasari describes. In neither picture is the Virgin or Child treated in the animated manner of the Renaissance; the Child is heavy in outline and fretful in expres-

sion and shows but little study of nature, and the Mother, though dignified in conception, is dull and stilted. This is the case, too, with Fra Angelico's Madonnas, who have still much of the Trecento clinging to them, and with whom the earlier paintings of his pupil Fra Filippo have close affinity. And by the time Filippo in his late works enters on new paths, many of the older Florentine sculptors had already pointed out the way.

The artists who effected this development of the Madonna composition in the sense of the Renaissance, and from whom all the others took their cue down to the 'baroque' period, are Donatello and Luca della Robbia. Ghiberti's powers of expressing feeling are so far removed from the intimate conception absolutely necessary to a new representation of Mother and Child, that he seems hardly to have tried his hand at it. The spectacular effect of his stately group in the 'Adoration of the Magi' proves how little his art was adapted to such a purpose. Some work of this nature from his hand is probably the model for a large plaque in the Berlin Museum (Plate XVIII.), in which the scene is represented in the manner of the Trecento as a solemn audience. The Virgin stands under a graceful Gothic baldachin, the Child in her arms, while from each side approaches a train of adoring angels. Similarly, though for other reasons, Jacopo della Quercia's Madonnas—all groups or reliefs of full-length figures—are far less pleasing than his other compositions and single figures. Quercia's bold and noble sense of form, the profound emotion and stormy stress of movement in his figures, have no place in a free and untrammelled representation of the relation between mother and child.

Nor does Donatello regard the idea from the purely natural or human point of view. For him Mary remains ever the august and stately Virgin, the Mother of God, encompassed with all the dignity of her exalted mission, and filled with premonition of her Son's destiny. The Child, on the other hand, he represents as a complete infant, mostly as a helpless bambino in swaddling-clothes. The Virgin is always in profile, of classical severity, the forehead and nose in one straight line; a large veil usually covers the back of the waving hair and falls over the mantle of heavy material, under the folds of which the outlines of the figure are almost obliterated. Later on the artist changes this, the head covering is looped up or ribbons woven in the hair, the mantle is thrown back or omitted

altogether, and the outlines of the figure allowed to show through close folds of a rich and delicate robe. A characteristic example, important at the same time as the sole Madonna relief by Donatello of which there is documentary proof and a precise date, is the little tondo in one of the bronze reliefs of the High Altar in S. Antonio at Padua.

But even in this later period Donatello's conception remains unchanged. Always gravely, sometimes with a look of brooding sorrow, as though she dimly foresaw the fate of her Son, the Mother gazes at the infant, now pressing it tenderly, half fearfully, to her bosom, now holding it away from her the better to see it, or again absorbed in adoration. To this grandly conceived and typical figure of the Virgin that of the Child stands in curious but obviously intentional contrast. Any sign of supernatural intelligence, to indicate that this is the Christ Child, is carefully eliminated. The Child is represented as of the tenderest age—usually under a year, either in swaddling-clothes or in a little shirt, or nude, nestling half unconsciously against his mother or grasping at her robe or her bosom. In form, movement, and expression, the artist reproduces the infant to the very life, but studiously avoids all individuality of treatment. Over a dozen compositions of this nature have come down to us which we may confidently ascribe to the master himself. Of others we have contemporary plaster copies, and from a number of Madonna reliefs by his pupils we may recognise the master's models which they reproduced more or less faithfully. Sometimes the Virgin is represented full-length, and then always accompanied by angels and cherubs; but as a rule the master prefers the half-length figure with very occasionally (and then quite subordinately) a couple of cherub heads in the corners at each side; these, in curious contrast to Donatello's real *putti*, are invariably apathetic, if not sullen, in expression. Only once, in the remarkable bronze figure on the High Altar in S. Antonio at Padua (Plate XXVI.), did Donatello venture on a statue of the Madonna.

Donatello's grand but, on the whole, harsh conception of the Madonna, inspiring as it was to its many imitators, found no real following. The tendency of Florentine art was much more towards the simpler, more natural and humanly tender presentment of Mother and Child and their relationship to each other, such as Luca della Robbia offered. Not that Luca was the first in this field. Italian

art dealers during the last decade have unearthed out of the villas and private chapels in the neighbourhood of Florence a considerable number of Madonna reliefs, and here and there a Madonna statuette of tinted clay or plaster which, by their Gothic framework and their affinity to the sculptures on the side doors of the Duomo, must be Florentine work dating from the twenties or thirties, some even from the first decade of the Quattrocento. All these sculptures show (combined with a strong leaning towards the last remnants of the Gothic), in greater or less degree, faults in the proportions of the figures and their relation to nature, which preclude their being ascribed to any important artist of the day. But there is about them so artless and lovable a sentiment, they introduce into art such a tender and human aspect of motherhood, that they are important far beyond their artistic merit. (See Plate XIX.) Here Mary clasps the Child to her, caresses and kisses him; there she plays with him, tickles his neck or offers him an apple or a grape; again, she holds him to her breast, rocks him to sleep, or adores the Infant lying in her lap. These and similar scenes of quiet family love are depicted in their naïve unconsciousness with great delicacy, freshness, and vivacity. Through them the lifelike presentment of one of the purest of human joys became firmly established in Italian art.

All that was wanting of realism and artistic finish in these Madonnas of the Florentine clay modellers is supplied by Luca della Robbia, thanks to his training under the influence of Donatello. We possess a number of replicas of small Madonna reliefs which may, in all probability, be regarded as early works by Luca while under Donatello; while in some respects they are strongly reminiscent of the clay works already mentioned. The Virgin still has the austere expression of Donatello's Madonnas, gazing almost mournfully at the Child who nestles lovingly against His mother, or tries to entice her to play. Luca only arrives at full freedom and independence in the reliefs for the Singing Galleries. From that time onwards till his old age the artist continued to create those exquisite Madonna reliefs in glazed clay of which, despite their fragile nature, quite a considerable number have been preserved. A peculiar combination of delicate fancy, keen observation and consummate insight into nature, an emotional depth and sense of purity added to a remarkable feeling for beauty, enabled the artist

FLORENTINE SCULPTOR

MADONNA AND CHILD

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

ANDREA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA AND CHILD

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

to give expression in these Madonna reliefs to one of the most beautiful sides of family life, and that with a diversity, an exquisite charm and simplicity such as we only meet with again in Raphael's incomparable pictures. And though Raphael may be preferred for his more perfectly rounded composition, for his conscious mastery in the handling of every artistic medium, for intensity of expression and the total absence of any touch of the commonplace or personal in his figures; yet in naïve description, in depth of sentiment, in subtlety of observation and fidelity to nature, he does not equal Luca della Robbia. On Luca's pure and gracious Virgins and his lovely children, whose forms and attitudes hold the mirror up to nature, and yet are as far removed from all realism or *genre* as they are from the artificial and self-conscious, there lies all the charm of an art which is just awakening to a sense of its powers and is still striving after perfection, and therefore has none of the boastful consciousness of its own beauty. (Cf. the Plates in Chap. IV. on Luca della Robbia.)

The subsequent development of Florentine plastic art, particularly as regards its Madonnas, rests on the respective influences of Donatello and Luca della Robbia, which by their very divergence exerted so beneficial an effect. Donatello's splendid and untrammelled genius, his wide reputation, and his position at the head of Italian art through more than half a century, carried away the whole young artistic world wherever it came in contact with him. Della Robbia's art, on the other hand, confined itself apparently to the smallest circle, very possibly for practical reasons: lest the valuable secret of the glaze he used for his tinted clay should leak out. Luca's nephew, who grew up in his workshop, is the only pupil he is known to have had. But as his productions, more especially his Madonna reliefs, were in every church and every street of Florence and the surrounding district, and their unique beauty familiar to every eye, they could not fail to exert a strong influence over Florentine sculpture throughout the entire fifteenth century.

To Donatello and Luca della Robbia belongs in equal degree the merit of having recognised the feeling from which the modern idea of the Madonna arose, and having satisfied the universal longing for its artistic realisation in the most complete and inspiring manner. For more than half a century the representation of the Madonna is the very centre-point of art in Florence, and thence

almost throughout Italy. In order to supply, even in a measure, the enormous demand, and to bring these works of art within the means of the less wealthy classes, they resorted to the expedient of making plaster or, more rarely, clay copies of the marble, bronze, or clay originals, and, like them, tinted and placed in shrines. Of these plaster casts, though they were practically unknown until the last twenty or thirty years, and particularly exposed to neglect or destruction, over a thousand are still in existence. Thousands must have adorned the altars of private chapels, the rooms of palaces, the villas and houses of the citizens, as well as the shrines and street corners of Florence and the neighbourhood. Even in the inventory of Lorenzo dei Medici several such plaster copies are mentioned in the various villas, and are valued at a price very little lower than that of the originals. These plaster reliefs are of peculiar importance in the history of art. At first, as the old catalogue of the Victoria and Albert Museum shows, one hardly knew what to make of them, but by degrees we have been able to refer most of them to their originals, especially those copied from some well-known artist. By their aid we have been able not only to enrich the list of the works of a number of sculptors and to arrive at a better understanding of their interdependence, but to bring forward several hitherto unknown artists into the light of appreciative criticism.

Donatello's immediate successors in the production of Madonna reliefs are so strongly imbued with his influence—probably because they had to carry out the work which Donatello himself only partially completed—that with their mediocre ability they often give us strangely distorted versions of their master's models. The grave and troubled look of the Madonna will be turned to vapid sentimentality, or Donatello's purely human type of child determines the character of the whole group, which is rendered still more markedly realistic by the introduction of angels, in imitation of Donatello's romping *putti*, as playfellows to the Child. In this style are the marble Madonna reliefs of Agostino di Duccio in the Museo dell' Opera at Florence and at the church at Auvillers, as also a plaster relief in the Berlin Museum and the small bronze reliefs by Bertoldo, who, almost alone among the crowd of Donatello's imitators—for the most part nameless—shows any signs of individuality. Donatello's collaborator, Michelozzo, remains faithful

in his Madonna reliefs—of which about half a dozen have become known to us, besides the Madonnas of the tomb monuments—to the early manner of the master. Beauty of form and proportion and the classic alto-rilievo are altogether characteristic of Michelozzo; the outcome, doubtless, of the influence of Ghiberti under whom he began his career, and later of his younger friend Luca della Robbia, with whom he collaborated frequently.

A new path was struck out by another artist, Desiderio da Settignano, named as a pupil of Donatello, under whose influence, at all events, he must have developed. To him is due the transformation of the Madonna motive into a simple picture of mother and child. His peculiar capacity for seizing on characteristic and emotional traits, the extraordinary charm of his types of youth and childhood, find the most felicitous expression in the Virgins and Holy Children of his Madonna reliefs. By comparing them with the tondo in the Marsuppini tomb, about half a dozen Madonnas—all in very low pictorial relief, and exquisite in modelling—as also a small clay group in the Victoria and Albert Museum, have been authenticated as the work of Desiderio (Plate LXVI.). This group is full of the infectious childish mirth of the cherub frieze in the Pazzi Chapel, combined with a natural grace in attitude and expression which belongs to Desiderio alone. In the reliefs this engaging *joie de vivre* is somewhat subdued, out of respect for the sacred subject; but the sweet and playful spirit, the sense of unalloyed happiness and unity, breathes from every one of these groups, in each of which Mother and Child seem to discover some new and fascinating form of caress.

Quite on similar lines to those of Desiderio are the works of his contemporary, Antonio Rossellino, a number of whose Madonna reliefs in marble or in clay and plaster copies are in existence. They differ from the former artist's work in their high though also pictorially treated relief, and instead of the nervous, almost restless activity of Desiderio's Madonna and Child, Antonio's display a certain comfortable tranquillity. Mutual love and happiness speak no less plainly from those placid faces, but in a lower key.

With the Madonnas of Benedetto da Maiano, which are also fairly numerous, both in reliefs and in large and small groups, we reach the close of this peculiar development of the representation of the Madonna. The sweet and interesting figures of his Madonnas

and children have something shy and retiring about them; a quiet glow of contemplative happiness, a peculiarly touching sentiment, recalling German art of the same period, radiates from nearly all these compositions by Benedetto. In his later productions this feeling reaches the point of sentimentality with which a certain generalisation of form and expression goes hand in hand.

The rest of the Tuscan marble sculptors of this period bring nothing new, nothing individual to the sum of Madonna representations—not even Mino da Fiesole or Matteo Civitale. Mino, though so spontaneous and full of character in his portrayal of nature, is often self-conscious if not affected in his composition. This is very apparent in his numerous Madonna reliefs, in which he is a follower of Desiderio; they are mostly graceful and charming, but never quite free from mannerism. The few Madonna reliefs and statues we have of Matteo Civitale are dull and without charm of any kind. The rest—such as Francesco di Simone, the so-called Master of the marble Madonnas closely resembling Simone in style, of whom we have dozens of Madonna reliefs as well as several small busts, Matteo Rosselli and other journeymen-followers of the great masters—who were obliged to seek their fortunes outside their native city, are none of them original, and mostly imitators of Antonio Rossellino.

Andrea della Robbia, to whom the majority of the plastic Madonna pictures of the later decades of the Quattrocento are to be referred, carried on the traditions of his uncle, Luca, whose pupil and long-continued collaborator he was, well into the Cinquecento. The high favour in which Luca's Madonna reliefs were held was extended to Andrea's work when, after Luca's death, he took over the enterprise which was carried on by his sons after his death in 1525. In countless unpretentious groups, as on richly decorated altars and lunettes, in which the Madonna is surrounded by saints and angels, Andrea della Robbia has portrayed the Holy Mother and Child. Quite apart from tinted plaster copies of his work which are more rarely met with, there are more than a hundred of these glazed clay reliefs in various sizes still extant, and in the artist's own time the number must have been very much greater. Gentle and pliable by nature, Andrea della Robbia had little originality, but followed as closely as possible in the footsteps of his uncle and master under whom he worked for almost a lifetime. Consequently his affinity to Luca, particularly in his Madonna reliefs, is so close

Alinari

ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO

MADONNA AND CHILD

Museo Nazionale, Florence

Alinari

ANDREA SANSOVINO

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ST. ANNE

Sant' Agostino, Rome

that they are still frequently taken for one another even by experts. But he repeats his types continually, and even in his compositions shows little variety. His figures have a tender charm but lack that subtle distinction which is the sign-manual of Luca, of whose works they are but too often simply inferior copies.

During the wellnigh fifty years over which their production extends, Andrea's Madonnas show little development, and if so, decidedly not for the better. His earliest work is the freshest, the figures there show individual character and are extremely graceful, the drapery is rich and tastefully disposed, while an atmosphere of rapt love and happiness breathes from Mother and Child alike (Plate xx.). Later on the composition becomes less tranquil, the drapery falls uneasily, and finally degenerates into mere repetition of stereotyped and conventional forms.

As well as by Luca, Andrea della Robbia appears to have been influenced—particularly as to his Madonnas—by his much more versatile and gifted contemporary, Andrea del Verrocchio. It is by his paintings that Verrocchio is of such marked importance for the Madonna representations of the last quarter of the fifteenth century, more particularly by reason of his influence in this as in other directions upon his pupil and collaborator Leonardo da Vinci. His Madonnas are not distinguished by much diversity either in composition or expression. There is little difference between the admirable clay relief originally tinted to imitate marble from the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova, now in the Bargello (Plate xxi.) and the marble relief in the Museo Nazionale, which, in its turn, is copied line for line in several of his Madonna pictures. Similarly, the composition of the marble relief of the 'Madonna with an Angel,' in the possession of Mr. Quincy A. Shaw of Boston, reappears almost exactly in a picture in the National Gallery in London. But what in Verrocchio's eyes was the only consideration, absolute truth to nature even in the smallest details, the artist achieved in masterly style without ever descending to triviality. He absorbs himself as earnestly and thoroughly in the study of nature as if he were the first to enter on that path, and his delight in the beauty of nature down to her smallest creations illuminates every one of his figures. The artist bases his conceptions on Donatello and Luca della Robbia, whose feeling for the grand and the noble in art finds its full expression again in his pupil Leonardo.

In Leonardo's numerous Madonna pictures—the majority of them, it is true, preserved to us only in his own sketches and the copies of his pupils—as in those of Raphael, whom he strongly influenced, we find, instead of the naïve efforts of the Quattrocento, the conscious mastery over every medium of art, the assurance born of knowledge painfully acquired by foregoing generations. The contemporary plastic productions show nothing approaching this. The sculptors of the Late Renaissance afford, in no direction, so little satisfaction as in the Madonnas. We have seen how the younger Tuscan marble-workers of the Quattrocento—Benedetto da Maiano and, in a still higher degree, Matteo Civitale—exhibit in their later works an ever-increasing tendency towards generalisation of form, a repression of all individuality, and lay greater stress on the purely academic in construction, pose, and outline. Those tendencies find their extreme expression in Andrea Sansovino. What he lost by discarding the grace and charm which the Quattrocento had arrived at by its own peculiar means, he sought in vain to replace, or, as he imagined, like many another of the present day, to surpass, by massive forms and striking contrasts in grouping, movement, drapery or expression. Less than any other does the intimate relationship of mother and child bear conventional treatment. Let the artist omit the multitude of small, perfectly individual traits that mark the tender solicitude of the mother and the charm of the child's awakening consciousness and love, and he at once loosens the tie that binds them, and they become a group of more or less mutually indifferent persons. The work loses equally in truth and depth of emotion, and the graver, more devout conception of the subject, which they thought to have put in the place of the despised 'genre' compositions of the Quattrocento, too often degenerates into merely empty and pretentious display. This is certainly the case with the tondo reliefs on Andrea's famous tomb monuments in S. Maria in Araceli in Rome, as well as in his Madonna statue in the Duomo at Genoa, and his group of the 'Virgin and St. Anne' in S. Agostino in Rome (Plate XXII.). But it applies in more or less marked degree to the Madonnas of his fellow-artists and imitators both in Rome and Florence, works which must be considered as partly connected with Andrea; such as the Madonnas in the lunettes of the Anima, and in San Giacomo a Ripetta at Rome. Among Andrea's younger compatriots we may

JACOPO SANSOVINO

MADONNA WITH ST. JOHN

From a clay relief in the Museum, Berlin

Alinari

MICHELANGELO

MADONNA DELLA SCALA

Casa Buonarroti, Florence

name Lorenzetto, whose good fortune it was to work for a time under Raphael in the Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo at Rome, and who executed the marble statue above Raphael's tomb in the Pantheon—a mediocre affair which leaves one completely cold. The group by Francesco Sangallo in Orsanmichele in Florence has, besides similar faults, something almost brutal about it. More pleasing are the Madonnas of Pietro Torrigiano, one of those Italian artists who, following the prevalent habit of the Swiss *Landsknechte*, wandered from land to land, ready to exchange the chisel for the sword when occasion required. In Pierino da Vinci's reliefs the whole conception is spectacular and forced; witness the nude figure of the sleeping Christ Child in the plaster group in the Berlin Museum which has all the appearance of the dead body of an adult. Similarly pretentious and devoid of emotional expression is the small marble relief of the 'Holy Family,' by the same artist, in the Museo Nazionale in Florence.

Of Andrea's pupils only Jacopo Sansovino has succeeded in endowing his Madonnas with a certain stately dignity by reason of having adopted Donatello's motives and translated them freely into the language of the Cinquecento. The majority are known to us only in plaster copies, extremely effective in their rich colouring and framework. His group of the 'Madonna and youthful St. John' which was in the Loggetta of the Campanile, Venice, shows much grace and skill in the composition, but this only increases the forced and unnatural impression produced by the massive proportions of the figures (Plate XXIII.).

However, all these sculptors are dependent to a greater or less degree on the one artist who in this period treated the Madonna motive entirely after his own unique manner—on Michelangelo. The subject seems to have appealed to him in his early years. Besides two paintings, we have the well-known early bas-relief of the 'Madonna of the Steps' in the Museo Buonarroti in Florence (Plate XXIV.), the two wonderful tondi in the Bargello and at Burlington House in London, and the group in the Cathedral at Bruges, all in marble. From his later period we can only add to these the unfinished group in the Medici vault under S. Lorenzo which, however, is the only one among his plastic productions which exhibits to the full the artist's peculiar characteristics (Plate XXV.).

In the 'Madonna of the Steps' Michelangelo borrows a favourite

Florentine motive which goes back to Donatello (cf. chap. v.), and yet how different already is his treatment from that of any of his predecessors, though he was only about seventeen at the time. Here is no trace of 'genre' in the relations between mother and child, let alone between them and the spectator; not a glance, not one soft outline or engaging gesture by which the artist might seek to ingratiate himself. Purely artistic problems, and those of the highest, alone occupy Michelangelo, and for these he ever finds some new solution; problems, indeed, for whose introduction into art he is himself often responsible. In Burckhardt's opinion 'it wanted but little to make the Madonna of the Cappella Medici the one perfect example of a Madonna group in the round—nearly all the others are designed for the front view only.' But the representation as such has gained nothing thereby. Scarcely one of these compositions recalls the Madonna and Holy Infant, hardly even any mother and child, so impassively do they regard one another, so slight a connection does there seem to be between them. Henceforth we find in Italian plastic art no single rendering of the Madonna group having any real claim to that designation.

Brogi

MICHELANGELO
MADONNA AND CHILD
San Lorenzo, Florence

Alinari

DONATELLO

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD

High Altar, Sant' Antonio, Padua

III

THE MADONNA RELIEFS OF DONATELLO AND THEIR REPRODUCTIONS BY HIS PUPILS AND FOLLOWERS

SOME years ago I sought to direct attention to a forgotten section of Donatello's works: his Madonna reliefs, to which end I brought forward a considerable number, and endeavoured to point out their individual traits. Since then I have become acquainted with a further series of cognate works, for the most part in old plaster or *papier-mâché* copies, which are well worth bringing once more to the light of day, as they serve to round off the impression of the artist, and by comparison with his better known works help us to determine which are Donatello's own handiwork, and to what degree his originals may be recognised in the versions of his imitators and followers.

What I have already pointed out as characteristics of Donatello's Madonnas may be repeated here almost unchanged: 'The grave and noble lines of the Virgin's head, usually in profile, the loving solicitude for the Child, who is generally represented as a helpless babe in swaddling bands or nearly nude, the rich drapery and the characteristic wide veil through which the form of the head and the ornaments in the hair are visible, or the corners falling in picturesque folds over the neck and shoulders. If the veil be absent, the artist makes up for it in the delicately finished treatment of the waving, loosely bound hair. Bold modelling is employed to produce large, wellnigh typical features. The profile position of the chief figure, the upright pose, occasionally a certain austerity in the grouping of the figures and their position in the allotted space, the straight lines and sharp angles in bend of arm or knee, the large-boned frame, combined with a certain degree of fullness in the figure of the Virgin, and the archaic ornamentation of nimbus and framework—all this is in marked contrast to the numerous and varied renderings of the subject by Florentine plastic art in the

second half of the Quattrocento, and at once relegates these works to a period earlier by several decades.'

Hans Mackowsky, in his little book on Verrocchio, amplifies my remarks on Donatello's Madonna compositions: 'His Madonnas are of the race of antique heroines, the Prophetesses, the Sibyls; and like them have looked deep into the human heart and the sorrow of the world. Though dulled by resignation, the grief of Niobe lives in the wide, fixed gaze; as if they knew how soon they must be parted, they clasp the Babe in a passionate embrace, wrap it close in the wide folds of drapery, and terrify rather than soothe it by their stormy caresses.'

In the abundance of Donatello's productions only two Madonnas have documentary proof of their authenticity: the great bronze statue on the High Altar of S. Antonio in Padua (Plate XXVI.) and the bas-relief in the background of one of the 'Miracles of St. Anthony,' both therefore belonging to the same advanced period of the artist's career, 1446. The former, being a statue, can only with certain limitations be reckoned among the reliefs; the latter is diminutive in size and insignificant in position, and most probably, like the whole relief, partially altered by the hand of the artist who chased it. Nevertheless, what has been said above as to the characteristics of Donatello's Madonnas applies fully to them; moreover, they stand so completely alone when compared with the Madonnas of other artists, and exhibit the peculiarities of the great master in so striking a degree, that they afford a perfectly adequate standard when looking for further renderings by Donatello of the same subject.

The earliest authenticated Madonnas by Donatello I take to be the two marble reliefs in the Berlin Collection: the Madonna Pazzi (Plate XXVII.), of which there are a few plaster copies, and the Madonna Orlandini (also appearing in occasional copies, like other art treasures of that House[1]), probably an heirloom from the Medici. In both of them the Virgin is represented in profile clasping the Holy Infant tenderly to her bosom and gazing with wistful sorrow into his eyes. The broadly conceived modelling of the figures in the Pazzi relief, the strong simple folds of the

[1] With Donatello's Madonna we acquired in 1842, likewise from the Orlandini family, the marble alto-rilievo of Cosimo de' Medici and the bas-relief profile portraits of Matthias Corvinus and his wife, the Neapolitan princess.

DONATELLO

THE PAZZI MADONNA

Museum, Berlin

DONATELLO

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

heavy mantle, the handling of the marble, as also certain faults of foreshortening in the left hand, lead one to place the production of this manifestly authentic masterpiece in the early twenties. The Orlandini Madonna, essentially inferior both in style and finish, and therefore executed in the *bottega*, points by the more elaborate treatment of the folds, the softer contours, and the more 'genre'-like conception of the Child, to a somewhat later date—probably about 1425 or a little later. Among the few Madonnas of this period by Donatello's fellow-workers or followers we meet two reliefs which clearly proclaim their indebtedness to these or similar Madonnas of the master. These are the Madonna relief in the marble altar of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, an authenticated work by Buggiano about 1429 (not Donatello's, as was hitherto assumed), and a tondo in a coloured frame by Michelozzo in private possession in Florence, but of which the Berlin Museum owns a plaster copy. In the latter we may mark, besides that of the Pazzi Madonna, the influence of later Donatello reliefs in the fuller contours of the Virgin, the pose of the head, almost full face, and the wavy hair. Closely akin to the Orlandini Madonna is a relief of which there are a good many crude copies. One of these is in the Berlin Museum, another was over the door of the little chapel beside the Palazzino Strozzi which has lately been sacrificed to the sanitation and modernising craze of the municipal authorities. This chapel, like the palace, was erected a little before the middle of the fifteenth century, so that the relief in question (executed in *pietra serena*), as it forms an integral part of the architecture, must be of the same date.

The large number of closely corresponding copies of this composition and their marked Donatellesque character prove almost beyond a doubt that they are all based on some lost original of the master's which could not have been produced later than the twenties. Rather earlier than later we must place a small Madonna relief of which there are two known plaster copies, one in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Plate XXVIII.), the other belonging to Dr. W. Weisbach in Berlin, where in place of the two saints an angel stands at either side of the Virgin. This rich composition of six full-length figures is so admirably grouped and so wonderfully effective in its setting in the noble vaulted architecture, that the small relief must undoubtedly be ranked as one of the finest among the master's earlier works. The similarity between the music-playing angels and the musicians

of the 'Salome' relief on the Siena font, and the strong affinity of the architecture in both productions, supply clear enough indication of the date, though, judging by the more ample and unbroken folds of drapery, as well as the greater simplicity of modelling and composition, the work in question was executed some years earlier than the other.

The fact of the Mother and Child being placed full face, the voluminous draperies of the Virgin, the suppression of all details, and the fact that both Mother and Child are attentive to accompanying saints and angels instead of to one another as hitherto, finds its explanation partly in the peculiar composition of the *santa conversazione*, of which this is probably the first example in Italian plastic art, partly in the very small dimensions of the piece, the original of which was probably a bronze.

A few other Madonna pieces of the master, produced shortly after this small relief, differ but little in character from those already described. One of these bears a close relationship to the Sienese 'Salome' relief in the figure of the Child, who turns round startled in the Mother's arms, just like one of the children staring horrified at the severed head of the Baptist. It occurs frequently in plaque form (a copy in silver is in the possession of Canon Schnütgen of Cologne Cathedral). There is a marble relief very similar to this in the Victoria and Albert Museum in which the Child, sitting on a cushion before the Mother, is turned in much the same way. The choice of a variety of materials for the voluminously folded drapery of the Virgin, the characteristic modelling of the Child and the note of 'genre' in the motive, besides the more finished quality of the details, point to a later date; I should say the work was produced not much before 1430. A contemporary replica, the only specimen I know of, is in the Berlin Museum, and is of peculiar interest from a number of small divergencies which represent almost as many improvements on the original model. The most conspicuous point about the London relief is the omission of the rose which Mary holds in her left hand; the position of the Child's right leg, too, is very unnatural. Not that this justifies us—as has been done—in assuming the marble relief to be a forgery; style and technique testify clearly to its genuineness, as well as several small details of procedure in which it differs from the plaster copy. However, these divergencies lead us inevitably to the conclusion that not Donatello him-

self but an assistant craftsman executed the marble relief after the master's clay model, on which the plaster copy was then moulded.

In that last-named composition we find little of the grandeur of pose and design, the austere and sorrow-laden sentiment, the large classical features we have learned to consider so significant of Donatello's Madonnas. These qualities are very marked in a Madonna relief of this period, only one copy of which—a rather indifferent, probably reduced, untinted clay relief in the Berlin Museum—is known to me. Here the nude Child stands before his Mother, who adjusts an amulet round his neck. Grave and wistful, with widely opened eyes, Mary gazes on the face of the Child, who strokes the Mother's cheek with a fond and timid gesture. For the first time the Virgin is without a veil; a ribbon with fluttering ends binds the thick and waving hair. As far as this copy will justify an opinion, we may put this composition down at about 1430.

In the course of the next ten years a marked change of style makes itself evident in Donatello's Madonna reliefs. If in the first decades of his career very low pictorial relief is characteristic of the artist, by this time the relief has become so high that on occasion the figures are almost in the round—not, however, in the manner usual to Greek or Roman alto-rilievo, but a peculiar flat high relief in which various figures or parts of some one figure are arranged with consummate skill on receding planes. I hardly think, as is usually assumed, that Donatello was led to adopt this striking method of procedure from his pronounced partiality for modelling in clay, which he began at this period, but rather from a study of the antique lapidary art. The extraordinary predilection of the Quattrocento for antique gems, for which patrons were ready to pay from ten to a hundred times more than for a fine piece of marble sculpture, a craze which artists shared with collectors, naturally brought the study of that branch of plastic art into prominence; and the sculptors, in particular, drew their knowledge of the antique, and many of their designs, from the cameos and *intagli*. This is proved in Donatello's case not only by his reputation as a connoisseur and his well-known reproductions of antique cameos from the Medici collection, but a number of his busts and statues display ornaments copied from these gems, and in certain works of his middle and later period he introduces a more or less free rendering of motives or single figures from the same source. Considering his enthusiasm for antique

gems, called forth less by his studies in Rome than by his share in Cosimo's passion for collecting them after his return from banishment, it is not to be wondered at that Donatello's style was influenced in that direction.

In the pulpit of the Duomo and the work for the Sacristy of San Lorenzo this change of style has already taken place, and is apparent both in the Madonnas which in all probability belong to this period, and in the more crowded compositions. It is particularly marked in the small marble 'Madonna with the crouching Infant' in the Berlin Museum (Plate XXIX.) which, though it betrays the hand of a pupil, is most characteristic of the master in conception and touching sentiment. The Virgin's robe with its full soft folds is very reminiscent of the 'Judith' which Donatello executed as the centre-piece of a fountain for Cosimo shortly before settling in Padua. The curious ornamentation with alternating cherub heads and palmetto leaves is repeated almost exactly in the Choir Gallery of S. Lorenzo with which it is almost contemporary. A kindred work, one of the most imposing Madonnas Donatello ever produced, a marvel of sumptuous colouring and gilding, is the large clay relief in the Louvre. It was acquired about twenty years ago by Louis Courajod in Florence but found little favour in Paris, where to this day it is regarded merely as a production of the Donatello school. The Virgin, seen in profile, gazes in mournful reverie into the distance, while the Child, seated on her lap, raises his little hand as if in benediction. The Virgin's dress, composed of different tissues, close fitting to the form, with rich and beautifully disposed folds and splendid coloured patterns, enhances the grand simplicity of the group.

A similar relief in clay—the figures likewise over life-size, and if anything more magnificent in colour and gilding—is the Madonna from S. Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi, now in the Berlin Museum (Plate XXX.), where Mother and Child are shown in the peculiarly involved grouping Donatello so much affected in his later period. Both are nearly full face; Mary holds the Child swathed in a tight bundle under her left arm and pressed closely to her, while with folded hands she looks down upon him. The contour of the head, the beautiful hands and waving hair of the Mother, recall at once the Virgin of the 'Annunciation' relief in S. Croce (see Plate IV.), as well as the bronze Madonna statue on the High Altar of the Santo at Padua. The rich pictorial treatment of the folds of drapery and the

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peculiar modelling of the Child make it probable that the relief in question was produced between these two works. Here, perhaps for the first time, we find the Child, whom the sculptor has hitherto presented either nude or clad only in a little shirt, tightly swathed in bands, a helpless bambino.

Very similar, too, is the small Madonna relief presented to the Louvre with the Davillier collection, in which the Madonna, seen '*en face*,' clasps the Child in both arms. Two cherubs are introduced as in the small marble relief in Berlin which, like this one, is oval in form. Like the Berlin relief, this one was not executed by Donatello himself; it seems to suggest the hand of Michelozzo, for whom the Madonnas of this period of his great *compagno* became the models for his own productions. The hand of another pupil or fellow-sculptor who, though more accurate in copying Donatello's style, is exaggerated and clumsy and without Michelozzo's æsthetic feeling, is evident in the large marble tondo over the door of the south nave of the Duomo at Siena. Here again the Virgin's attire, particularly in the arrangement of the head-covering, is very reminiscent of the 'Judith.'

To this period belongs a large clay relief[1] in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of extraordinary charm and natural simplicity (Plate XXI.). The Virgin stands in a devout attitude before the Child, who, bound in swaddling-clothes and seated in a little chair, reaches out to grasp his mother's folded hands. Both are almost in profile, the flesh is modelled with the utmost finish, the two heads are broadly conceived and of great charm, the drapery rich and carefully disposed, and the whole piece bronzed, which would imply that this clay relief was designed as a model for carrying out in bronze. To conclude from this bronzing that the work is of modern origin, as

[1] It is customary to regard the clay reliefs and statuary of the Renaissance merely as models. This is true in the main of the second half of the Quattrocento and for the Late Renaissance, except in certain parts of the country, where the lack of stone suitable to the purpose made the employment of clay a necessity. But it is not the case during the first half of the Quattrocento, when these clay sculptures were produced, especially in Florence, as independent works of art, and after being fired were tinted and gilded. In fact, they constituted much the greater part of the small sculptures of that period. For its cheapness alone clay was the favourite medium in which to carry out the orders of less wealthy patrons. A whole series of capable Florentine artists of the first decades of the fifteenth century, whose names have not been handed down to us, worked exclusively in clay. Clay is the material in which Luca della Robbia produced most of his works; Donatello uses it for a considerable number of the sculptures of his advanced period, and it is frequently employed by his pupils and fellow-workers.

is frequently done, is a mistake; there are numerous instances to prove the frequent use of bronzing in the Quattrocento. The small plaster copy of this relief in the Berlin Museum, very delicately tinted and in excellent preservation, shows in the flattening of the forms and the more commonplace treatment of the whole composition that it was taken from the Victoria and Albert relief (or the bronze cast), and therefore that this latter is not a modern forgery as was at one time assumed.

In a closely affiliated composition the Child, here clad only in a little shirt, sits close against the Mother, who gazes down on him in devotion, and to whose arm he clings with one hand. The Berlin Museum acquired a short time ago a beautifully tinted plaster copy of this relief, the original of which is lost to us; a second copy is still in the hands of the art dealers of Florence. The veil is fuller and the forms simpler than in the London relief.

Several of Donatello's Madonnas of this period show her clasping the Child in both arms. The Louvre possesses the original of one of those compositions in the magnificent bronze now erroneously ascribed to Michelozzo. The Virgin is seen in profile sitting on the elaborately decorated folding chair which we so often find in the reliefs of Donatello and his followers. She clasps the tightly swathed infant to her bosom and leans her cheek fondly against his head. The costume and the arrangement of the hair, with ribbons wound fantastically among the heavy braids, is of great artistic charm, and, in conjunction with the pictorial handling of the relief and the position of the figures, misled critics formerly to assign the work to a follower of Michelangelo. Very similar in motive and of equal beauty, especially in the admirably drawn hands, is a Madonna clasping in her arms the Child, who wears a little sleeveless garment, a composition of which there are a few contemporary copies and various modern ones. The head of the Virgin with its thick waving hair resembles that of the large tinted clay Madonna of the Berlin Museum (cf. Plate xxx.), but the foreshortening is better, the Child more animated, the whole rendering embued with an air of tender gaiety. One of the old replicas of this Madonna is to be seen at the end of a street in Verona, a few doors from the Albergo di Londra, and here are added to the composition two music-playing or adoring angels similar to those on the High Altar of S. Antonio at Padua. This would lead one to infer that the

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Victoria and Albert Museum, London

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original was produced during Donatello's sojourn in Padua, whereas the handling of forms and drapery makes it more akin to the work in the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo.

In the enchanting little relief above a door in one of the reliefs with the miracles of St. Anthony in the cathedral, we possess a dated Madonna of Donatello's Paduan days, the sketch model for which was executed by the artist in 1446. It shows the group in much the same position as in the last-named relief, except that here the Child is nude and the whole treatment simpler and more sketchy, in keeping with the small dimensions of the piece and its decorative intention. How the artist might have thought of rendering this composition on a large scale is shown in the copies of a Madonna relief, the most familiar of which is to be found on the outside of a house in the Via Pietra Piana in Florence. The mechanical folds of drapery and a certain insipidity in the execution render it probable that this is not the original but a clay cast, such as are not infrequent in the case of Donatello's Madonnas. A plaster reproduction of the same composition in the Berlin Museum is more effective than this well-known clay relief, by reason of its delicate original tinting, and the beautiful shrine in true Donatello style. An affiliated composition, transformed by a pupil into pure 'genre,' is shown in the coloured clay relief of the 'Madonna suckling the Infant' in the collection of A. von Beckerath in Berlin. The plaster piece by a Paduan pupil of Donatello in the Berlin Museum gives probably a faithful rendering of a design by the master after the manner of the small Madonna in the above-mentioned relief in S. Antonio, as is proved more especially in the drawing of the hands, the contour of the head of the Virgin, and the flowing hair confined by a diadem.

We gain the best idea of the artist's activity in this direction from a very imposing composition of which I know two plaster copies, both about half life-size, one in the Berlin Museum, the other in Florence in the possession of Stefano Bardini. The Berlin copy shows the Virgin standing behind a parapet, the lips open as if in lamentation, and holding the Child before her while she regards it with a fixed and almost horrified stare. There will hardly be found another among all Donatello's renderings of the subject to match this one in dramatic intensity, bold modelling and masterly treatment of space. And yet the Berlin copy is only a fragment;

the complete composition is shown in the Florence replica, which still retains its original tabernacle frame but is unfortunately a mediocre piece of work, first crudely painted over and then ruthlessly scraped and otherwise damaged. In the Berlin copy the parapet (much sharper in outline but, unfortunately, also scraped) shows the upper edge only; here it extends into a semi-circular, pulpit-like structure, while a baldachin, supported on consoles, is arched above the Virgin's head. On either side stand nude angels singing to the accompaniment of lutes and cymbals, and a cherub head is introduced into the spandrels of the arch. The wooden tabernacle frame is characteristic of Donatello in form and carving; especially noteworthy is the decoration of the frieze with pairs of dolphins in very low relief. As ever with Donatello, the whole composition is most skilfully adapted to the space and yet perfectly clear and forcible. The fact that the above-mentioned Madonna in a street of Verona is also attended by two angels in much the same position might lead to the inference that that composition had originally been completed in other respects like the relief just described. But the compactness of the group, and the circumstance that a contemporary replica—and that by far the finer—still retains its old Donatello frame, would tend to prove that the angels in the Verona shrine were only added by some North Italian follower of Donatello in imitation of the more elaborate Madonna relief with the music-playing angels, which was probably executed in Padua.

The addition of attendant angels to this Madonna composition leads to the question as to whether there may not be similar more elaborate versions of this motive of Donatello's. I think I can point out several, though they have failed to be recognised as such, chiefly because they are mostly hidden under the clumsy reproductions of Donatello's unskilled workmen. Much affinity to the 'Madonna under the Vaulted Baldachin' is shown in a small circular plaster relief in the Berlin Museum. Mary sits in a flowery mead with folded hands adoring the infant in her lap, who grasps at her veil with the right hand; on either side stands a child angel holding aloft behind the group the familiar Donatellesque festoon, and shouting jubilantly. Contours, drapery and grouping accord with various Madonna compositions of the forties. In this bas-relief the figures and the ground are left white, while the background is

painted blue; the ornaments on the drapery and borders, the nimbus and the flowerets are gilded. As this is the familiar colour scheme of decoration found in the marble works of the Quattrocento, it is highly probable that the original was a marble tondo of similar size and let into some large piece of marble decoration.[1]

The 'Adoration of the Shepherds' is very similarly represented in various round and semi-circular clay and plaster reliefs; the work of Donatello's apprentices, no doubt, but certainly after the master's designs. Of these we may mention first a terra-cotta tondo in the Louvre (Piot Collection), the colouring of which is unfortunately washed off, and whose rich and most original Donatellesque tabernacle-frame is modern as regards its painting and gilding. The half-length figure of the Virgin, almost in profile, is a noble, and in the matter of drapery most sumptuous and finished, creation of the early forties, though the master's hand is sadly absent in the execution. The Child lying on her lap on a cushion is, however, commonplace in pose, and lifeless both in modelling and expression. In the right hand he holds a bird, in the left a small wreath (cake ?) such as we see not infrequently in the hands of the infant Jesus and *putti* of the Madonna compositions of this period, especially those of Donatello and the artists of his part of the country. As shown on a few remaining fragments, the background was formerly decorated with small round pieces of glass painted with a slender vase and cherub head alternately. Equally characteristic of Donatello is the full round laurel wreath interwoven with ribbons which surrounds the relief, the almost quadrilateral tabernacle, the Evangelist-symbols in front of large shells at the corners, the small enwreathed shells in the frieze, and the flying angels of the socle holding a wreath in which is a coat of arms.

Two other semi-circular compositions, very much akin in treatment, the one looking to the right, the other to the left, present the half life-sized figures of the 'Holy Family in Adoration of the Child.' Several old plaster replicas exist of both these reliefs; some good specimens are in the Berlin Museum. The group of the Virgin and Child—so markedly in the foreground in both renderings as to make

[1] This assumption turns out to be mistaken. I found the original in the collection of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Vienna, brought a few years ago from Catania to the Modena Palace. It is a bronze relief, in a rich marble frame, by Francesco di Simone.

all the rest into mere accessories—is similarly handled as in the above-mentioned tondo in the Louvre, except that the dress is simpler and closer fitting, and the disposition of the folds less complex, mainly because in this instance the veil is subordinated. Consequently we must place the creation of the original some five or ten years further back, for which the contour of the Virgin's head and the waving parted hair give additional evidence. The strong relationship between the two representations leads to the inference that both are the work of pupils (at whose door the unskilled, strongly anthropomorphic treatment of the animals' heads must be laid) from the same composition of Donatello's. Yet the essential difference between the two figures of the Joseph—each both in pose and form a true Donatello figure—would seem to contradict this view. In the one composition he crouches behind the mound on which the Infant is lying and holds fast to it with both hands, his uncouth head just peering over it and forming a sort of pendant to the heads of the animals on the other side of the Virgin. In the other he takes no part whatever in the adoration of the Child, whom even the animals approach with interest, but lies huddled together, asleep, behind the Virgin. No pupil or follower of Donatello would ever have designed or modelled either of these figures. The Joseph of the last-named relief is particularly bold in outline and foreshortening. A rather poor tondo in *papier-mâché* of small dimensions, and furthermore spoilt by a comparatively recent coat of paint, gives a very similar, fairly contemporary composition of Donatello's with full-length figures and the sleeping Joseph in much the same position. This is also in the Berlin Museum.

Several other Madonna compositions present the Virgin and Child in full-length figures attended by a bevy of ministering angels. They have come down to us in the coarse copies or more or less free versions of Donatello's workmen. Only one of them belongs to the artist's early period: the small marble bas-relief of the 'Virgin seated on Clouds' with the Infant Jesus in her lap and surrounded by angels and cherubim, the property of Mr. Quincy A. Shaw of Boston (cf. pp. 118, 119). Wrapped in a wide mantle, the whole head, saving the face, shrouded in her veil, the Virgin sits, or rather crouches, on the clouds, somewhat in the attitude of the 'Madonna in the Meadow' of the small tondo in the Berlin Museum. The Child looks up sullenly out of the deep cradle formed by the

Madonna's mantle and robe, while the mother gazes in mournful abstraction into the distance. Cherubs float here and there among the clouds and angels appear out of them in adoring attitudes, or part them in front of the holy group, and like some sublime vision it seems to sweep past us on the wings of the wind. The modelling is rapid even to sketchiness—here and there the wings of an angel or a whole head are drawn recklessly above the clouds—but the whole design is on a grand scale, and much is achieved by very simple means. Under the wide folds of the broadly treated garments the forms are indicated with the utmost precision and assurance. The relief comes from Rome—maybe produced by Donatello for some specific occasion during his sojourn there in 1432. The affiliated, but much more carefully finished little relief of the 'Assumption of the Virgin,' of about 1428, on the Brancacci tomb, seems to me, undoubtedly, to bear the character of a somewhat earlier date than this 'Madonna in the Clouds.' In close relation to this or a similar Madonna composition of Donatello's are a few marble reliefs by successors of his, amongst them one by Desiderio to which I shall refer more particularly in another place (cf. chap. v.). A very large Madonna relief in marble of similar composition forms the chief portion of a tomb (unfortunately with a modern slab but in the original framework) now in the Cappella Medici in S. Croce. This work at once reveals, as well by its architectonic arrangement as by the background of coloured marble and stone mosaic, the master hand of the Choir Galleries in S. Lorenzo and the Opera del Duomo; but much of it is so baroque, the figures, particularly the Infant, so constrained and so unwieldy, that one's first thought is of some clumsy follower of Donatello. Undoubtedly he had no hand in the execution, but the types, the drapery, the studied details, above all the design with its compact and skilful adaptation to the space, so loudly proclaim the creator of the Madonna reliefs already described that we can scarcely doubt that Donatello designed the work, while a pupil in his workshop carried it out in marble from his sketch-model.

That this particular workman was by no means the least skilled among Donatello's assistants is proved by three similar elaborate Madonna reliefs which we know only from the copies or rendering of other apprentices. All three show certain divergences from one another, not sufficiently important, however, to point to more than

one original. A large marble relief in the Victoria and Albert Museum represents the Virgin seated in a low chair of the characteristic shape and decoration, holding the Infant in her lap; on either side press child-angels offering toys, while another crouches at Mary's feet, and two, fluttering at her head, blow trumpets. The whole surface, after Donatello's manner, is filled with very coarse figures, which are in drawing and proportions often an utter failure; the Virgin is of colossal build, almost obese, with a small head and constrained in expression. There is in Florence, in private ownership, a large, very much damaged, and considerably lower relief in *papier-mâché* with the same composition, in which, however, the Child, supported by the Mother's left hand, lies on cushions at her feet, and instead of the trumpet-blower in front a third angel with a spinning-top is introduced on the right, behind the Virgin. In the details, too, especially in the disposition of the drapery, there are various differences which point to the superiority of the designer of this relief, or its original, over the creator of the London marble. The best preserved, but by far the clumsiest in execution, is a third variation on this composition the marble original of which is in the possession of Mme. Edouard André in Paris, and a plaster copy (white with tinted ornamentation) in the Berlin Museum. In this the position of the Child and the number and grouping of the angels are almost identical with the Florentine *papier-mâché* relief. The treatment of the marble is very clear and accurate, but the modelling of the figures, the proportions and the drawing, especially of the eyes, are incredibly coarse.[1]

No one seeing these pieces, without comparing them with the better copies, would ever dream that they were founded on a conception of the great master's. That they were even executed in his workshop is quite out of the question, at any rate in the case of the last-mentioned relief. How Donatello himself handled such a composition is shown at least in one work, only a small sketch-model, it is true, of which I know of two unchased bronze casts—one in the Louvre and one presented by Frau Hainauer to

[1] Quite recently I succeeded in acquiring for the Berlin Museum the little clay model which had served as the basis for all these marble productions. Although only a hasty sketch, it is intrinsically superior to these large reliefs. It confirms the conjecture I expressed that Donatello, for many of the numerous commissions which he could not finish single-handed, made only slight sketches, after which the completed works were executed by scholars and craftsmen in his workshop.

the Kaiser Friedrich Museum. That this little bronze relief—to judge from the escutcheon, commissioned by the Pazzi family—must be the work of some prominent artist of Donatello's circle had always been self-evident to me; the sketchy condition of the work, however, the eyes or other details of a head being here and there merely indicated by one or two strokes or a dot with the modelling tool, left me uncertain as to the master. After our collection had acquired in the model for the marble 'David' of the Casa Martelli a very similarly treated bronze cast, indubitably Donatello's handiwork, the problem of the authorship of the Pazzi tondo appeared to be solved. For Bertoldo, Donatello's most promising pupil among the bronze-workers, whose name I have already mentioned, the grouping is too complex, the relief too high, and the whole conception too grand and at the same time too simple; only the master himself could have designed this and modelled it with a few practised strokes. The Virgin sits upon the ground with the Infant in her lap as in the small tondo relief of the Berlin Museum, only here she holds the Babe with both hands instead of folding them in prayer. And while in that work two angels hold up a festoon of foliage behind the Madonna, here they draw back the garland, which hangs from the centre cherub of the three, and encircles the whole group. Round about the Virgin there stand and sit in pretty and very natural attitudes five little angels playing on different instruments. The contracted space is almost filled with figures, and yet the composition is not in the least involved: the figure of the Madonna stands boldly out and forms the central point round which the angels group themselves almost symmetrically. These are the typical Donatello *putti*, and in deference to them the artist has treated the group of Mother and Child more from the 'genre' point of view than is usual in his Madonna compositions. Judging from the style of drapery and handling of the folds, as also from the modelling of the *putti*, this tondo—in all probability the sketch for a large marble relief ordered by the Pazzi family—would date from about the year 1440, a period, that is to say, in which we may place the production of a particularly large number of his Madonnas.

There appear to me to be no sure indications that any one of the compositions I have just described was produced after Donatello's return from Padua, though it is true the necessary standard

afforded by authenticated works is lacking for this period, the bronze pulpits in S. Lorenzo having too great a share of the work of other artists both in design and execution to serve that purpose. Such groups as show the Mother and Child surrounded by music-playing angels might more readily be placed in this later period, but the artist's increasing predilection for elaborate design and movement in his compositions (witness the bronze pulpits) makes it more than probable that so artless a motive would rarely stimulate his creative powers. Public taste, too, had undergone a change meanwhile. Luca della Robbia and Desiderio had captured all hearts by their fair and gracious Madonnas and their irresistibly joyous Babes, and the younger generation of artists followed them and continued to impart to the group an ever-increasing degree of simplicity and homely charm.

IV

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

ANY one who has been for some length of time at the head of a great Art Collection with the task of constantly increasing, turning over, and placing works of art in the most advantageous light, will gratefully acknowledge the beneficial effect of this occupation on his capacity for acquiring knowledge. The fact of being directly and unceasingly busied with the art treasures, the responsibility in acquiring them, the opportunity for constant comparison while travelling in search of them, cultivate and sharpen the eye of one who is not born blind, as far as art is concerned, in a way quite beyond the most industrious turning over of photograph portfolios. This thought came home strongly to me in writing down the name of the artist whom I now propose to discuss.

The first attempt to reduce in some degree the chaos of the works (counting almost by thousands) of the della Robbia family was made by Barbet de Jouy, afterwards Director of the Louvre, in a short study on Luca della Robbia when the Campana Collection was acquired for the Louvre. Allan Marquand was led to his study of the della Robbias, first by the acquisition and restoration of an altar by Andrea della Robbia, and later by the purchase of an exquisite Madonna by Luca for his father, who handed it over to the Metropolitan Museum of New York. In the same way my own small essays on Luca and his school published from time to time during the last five-and-twenty years are in connection with those Robbia productions, which, as time went on, I have been able to acquire for our Collection. The fortunate circumstance that just in the last few years we have obtained several admirable specimens of Luca's work leads me to combine their introduction to the public with a comprehensive view of the artist's work, an absolute necessity now that the material has increased so greatly and been thoroughly sifted. Hitherto, any works on the subject have dealt only with one

or the other branch of Luca della Robbia's art, with the exception of Marcel Reymond's latest study *Les della Robbia* (Florence, Fratelli Alinari, 1897). Yet it is the publication of this particular work which necessitates that comprehensive criticism of the artist's whole career to which I have referred. For though it is true that the chief purpose of the book, like that of other works by the same author, is to serve as an advertisement for the Alinari photographs, yet the author comes forward with such an appearance of knowledge, with such an assured air of infallibility, and can address himself, thanks to the cheapness of the book and the numerous illustrations, to so large a public, that the views he enunciates are certain of a far wider circulation than falls to the lot of any really learned work.

Unhappily, in his desire for originality, Marcel Reymond, while expressing his high regard for his predecessors in the same path—more especially for me—has been at great pains to upset all our most carefully grounded statements. Personally unacquainted with the many important works outside Italy, he has been content to form his opinions from photographs, and what did not fit into his theories he simply pronounces to be spurious, forgeries, 'school' work and the like, and thus succeeds in mixing up the works of Luca and Andrea, yea, even of the third generation of Robbia, in the most deplorable manner. However, that categorical refutation of M. Reymond's erroneous and arbitrary dicta is unnecessary will be made sufficiently evident by examining his methods of procedure in a few important instances. It will be said, perhaps, that a work of such a character is its own condemnation, and is not worth the trouble of refuting, but I contend that the contemptuous or timid restraint which it is the fashion, particularly in Germany, to observe nowadays towards similar 'critical' and pretentious publications on the works of the Old Masters only does harm. In this way the most foolish and fantastic opinions have found a numerous following, simply because they were put forward with the necessary self-confidence, and meeting with no contradiction, produced a tribe of ready writers who have reduced parts of the History of Art to such a state of confusion that it is wellnigh impossible to reinstate the truth. We know, of course, that writers such as these are incorrigible: the stricter and more thorough the criticism exercised upon them, the louder will they proclaim the 'rights' of their story, for they have

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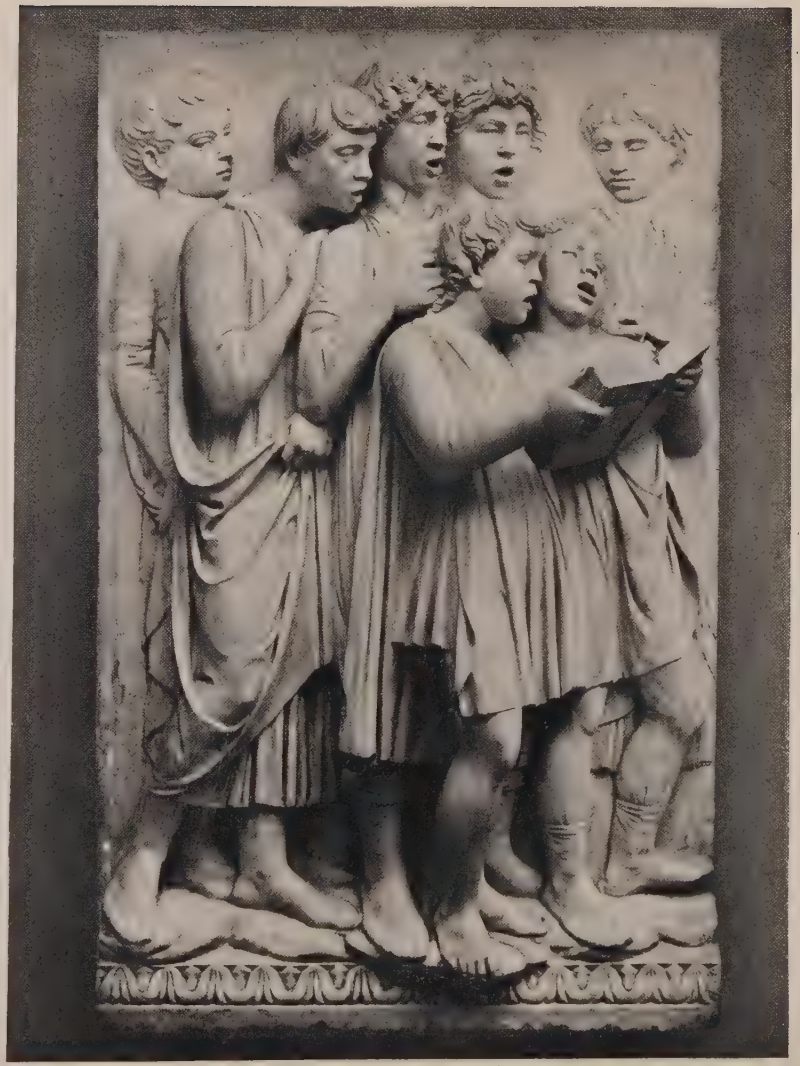
PANELS FROM THE CANTORIA

Museo dell' Opera, Florence



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no desire to learn, and, after all, they achieve their sole object—self-advertisement. That this applies to Marcel Reymond, although he proclaims himself in the deepest chest tones of virtuous conviction as the champion of Art and Truth, is sufficiently proved by his having taken over in his new, lately completed work, *La Sculpture Florentine* (Fratelli Alinari), the entire Robbia production *tale quale*. But he who will not learn, who refuses to be corrected, has no right to set himself up as a teacher of others.

To gain a clear insight into the characteristics of Luca della Robbia and to decide as to his works, it is more essential than with most artists, first to examine his definitely authenticated productions, and from this firm basis with the aid of *Stilkritik* test the genuineness of other less certain works. And this will be the easier if we include the authentic works of Andrea della Robbia in our critical survey, and thus make ourselves familiar once and for all with the distinctive attributes of the two artists.

Luca's earliest recorded work is at the same time his most famous: the Cantoria for the Duomo in Florence (Plates XXXII. and XXXIII.), for which he received the order in 1431 and the last payment in 1439. An architectonic framework of almost pure antique design encloses marble reliefs of playing and dancing children, youths and maidens to illustrate the *Laudate Dominum*. The reliefs are in the main Luca's own handiwork. They exhibit few differences of style worth mentioning, though they are unequal in execution; as we may assume from his mode of procedure in numerous other cases, the reliefs were all designed at the same time, and carried out from models which the artist had submitted to the Direction of the Opera del Duomo. The artist's distinctive qualities are already apparent in full force: an admirably rounded composition in semi-relief akin to the antique; rounded, beautiful forms, instinct with natural grace and individuality, admirable in movement, and the flow of drapery, with its full, broad folds, following the lines of the figures. If, compared with Luca's later works, we may detect here somewhat fuller contours, a certain rustic uncouthness in the broad faces and occasionally even in the attitudes, it must be put down to the influence of Donatello, especially of his romping *putti* on the Prato pulpit and on the Choir Gallery erected opposite to Luca's Cantoria on which Donatello was at work at that very time. Despite M. Reymond's assertion that '*la matière ne change pas la nature de*

l'œuvre,' I think every one will agree with me that this somewhat monotonous fullness of contour is in part at least consequent on the material—marble.

Another great work, likewise in marble, the plastic decoration of two altars for the chapels of St. Peter and St. Paul in the Duomo, entrusted to Luca in 1438, appears to have gone no further than the sketch-model for two marble reliefs of episodes from the lives of the two great apostles, which are now in the Bargello. Even in their unfinished condition the strong and noble figures and the bold handling of the drapery are plainly discernible. In five marble reliefs on the side of the Campanile facing the Duomo, which were carried out at the same time (1437-1439), and with which Luca completed Andrea Pisano's plastic decorations, the influence of the master is so strong that for the 'Tubal Cain,' at least, one would surmise some old model. In the two lifelike groups symbolising 'Learning,' the finely characterised Orientals representing 'Arithmetic,' and the Greeks representing 'Philosophy,' Luca does not, as M. Reymond thinks, follow the types created by Donatello in the Sacristy doors of S. Lorenzo (produced later than Luca's reliefs), but mediæval models which were still extant at the beginning of the Quattrocento.

In another marble work, a 'Tabernacle' of rich design ordered from the artist soon afterwards—in 1442—for the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova (now in Peretola near Florence) (Plate XXXIV.), a certain coldness and formality in the technique, of which there were traces already in the Cantoria, make themselves the more conspicuous in that the whole structure and the pose of the figures show a striving after architectural effect, a laboured restraint which give the work a lifeless air. Obviously, marble was not the medium to afford full scope to Luca's peculiar genius.

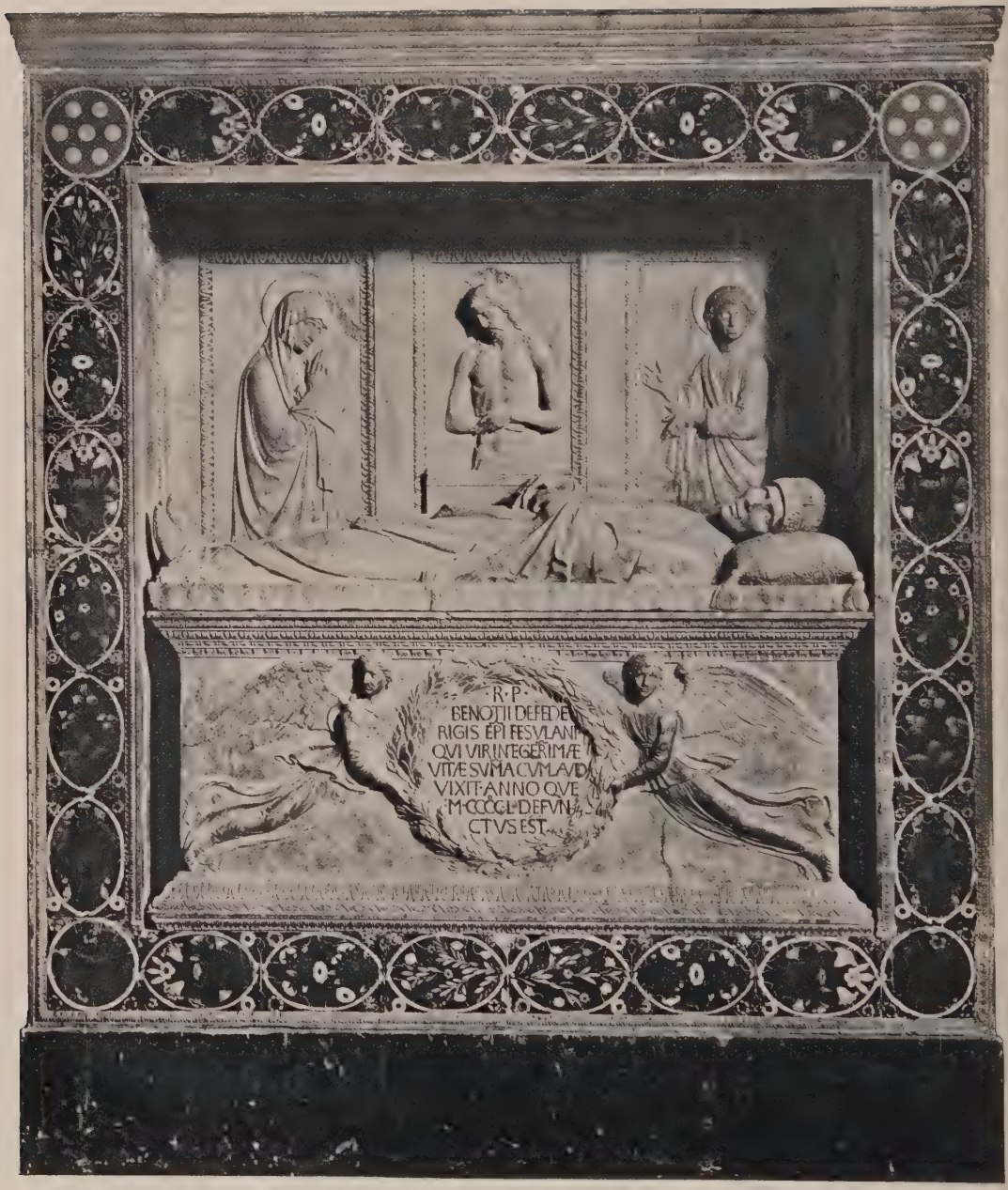
And this the artist seems to have himself felt; for not only have we but one more work in marble to record during the following forty years till his death, but the fact that even the tabernacle in Peretola was composed of divers other materials shows that to the colour-loving artist marble was an uncongenial medium for the expression of his ideas. The small door of the shrine, with 'Christ as the Man of Sorrows,' is cast in bronze, and above it two angels hold a round alto-rilievo of the 'Holy Dove' framed in a laurel wreath of marble; while the base of the shrine, the spandrels over the relief, and the background of the 'Pietà,' as also the cherubs on the marble

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

TABERNACLE

Peretola



Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

TOMB OF BISHOP FEDERIGHI

Santa Trinita, Florence

ground of the frieze, and the fruit garlands between them are of glazed and brightly tinted clay. Combined with the rich gilding which both the marble framework and the figures undoubtedly possessed, the shrine must have originally presented a radiantly coloured effect. But, after all, this mixture of heterogeneous material is not wholly pleasing, it is of interest chiefly as a phase in the development of the artist, who probably introduced these alien materials because they were his favourite mediums at the time.

Another important work of Luca's, a production of his advanced period, is likewise carried out in different materials, namely, the tomb of Bishop Federighi now in S. Trinita (Plate xxxv.), ordered in 1456 and completed already in the following year. One of the least elaborate of the tomb monuments of the Renaissance in Florence, it is yet one of the most artistic and beautiful, both as regards the composition, modelling and expression of the portrait figure, and the bold and yet refined colour scheme. This is most effectively shown in the extremely tasteful painted and glazed framework with flower ornament. Of the three relief figures in the background, the 'Pietà' is decidedly insipid and spiritless.

One work only of Luca's is entirely in bronze, and that, moreover, he did not carry out alone, namely, the doors to the new Sacristy of the Duomo (Plate xxxvi.). Donatello had received the commission for them in 1437, but had never begun them, and when, in 1443, he accepted the call to Padua, where he was engaged simultaneously on the improvements in the Cathedral, the erection of a magnificent High Altar with the most elaborate bronze decoration, and the production of a colossal bronze equestrian statue of the condottiere Gattamelata, the Directors of the Duomo Works began to despair of ever getting their favourite sculptor to carry out these doors for the two Sacristies. Accordingly they called upon Michelozzo, Donatello's partner for many years, to supply a model for one of the doors, and on the strength of that, at the end of February 1446, handed over the work to Michelozzo conjointly with Luca della Robbia and the builder and bronze-caster, Maso di Bartolommeo. Two years later the rough cast of the outside was finished, but then the work came to a standstill till 1461, when Giovanni di Bartolommeo, a brother of Maso, who had died meanwhile, carried out in about another two years the chasing and putting together of the various parts. The finishing of the whole work, particularly of

the inner side (consisting of plain panels only), was entrusted in 1465 to Luca alone, who in 1467 cast the two last compartments, but did not receive final payment for the work till 1476.

From the documents alone one would have some difficulty in gaining an accurate idea of the share taken by the separate artists in the execution of this door, did not the style throughout speak so distinctly in the language of the one, and that one Luca della Robbia, that Vasari seems perfectly justified in ascribing the whole work to him alone. Certainly the architectural structure and the partition of the door—as unpropitious to the relief as to the heads in the framework—is of Michelozzo's designing; perhaps, however, his model, which is expressly mentioned in the first contract, went so far as to show a sketch of the composition which was to occupy the separate panels. A touch of mechanical dryness in the figures must be put down to the bronze-worker, though, compared with some of the bronzes of Donatello and other contemporary artists, the execution is distinctly careful and satisfactory. With this one exception, all the rest of the work is undoubtedly Luca's. When Marcel Reymond denies his authorship of the four lower panels with the 'Evangelists,' and the heads in the framework, and declares them to be Michelozzo's, he has no other reason than that they do not please him as much as the others. I hardly think that any one will agree with him in this. I, for one, consider these particular panels remarkably fine. In any case, they exhibit precisely the same traits as the rest of the reliefs—the admirably balanced composition and masterly distribution of the figures, a wealth of invention though always repeating the same style of group, beautiful figures and noble, thoroughly individual heads, a great diversity in the disposition of the folds and broadly treated drapery, an unstudied grace and simplicity which are, however, the result of the most subtle calculation. All these qualities, so characteristic of the art of Luca della Robbia, are common to the reliefs and the heads on the doors of the Sacristy, and contrast vividly with the monotonous, impersonal types and the lack of distinctive sense of composition we find in Michelozzo's works.

When Luca della Robbia received the commission for the bronze door he had already—three years before—executed a large relief of the 'Resurrection' (Plate XXXVII.) for the lunette of this door and above his own Singing Gallery. The life-sized figures in semi-relief

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LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

BRONZE DOORS

New Sacristy, Duomo, Florence

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LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

THE RESURRECTION

are of glazed clay, pure white on a deep blue ground. Opposite, over Donatello's Cantoria, he placed, as a pendant and in the same material and colouring, the 'Ascension,' a commission which he received in October 1446. In these reliefs we have the first of Luca della Robbia's recorded works in glazed and tinted clay which have made him so famous and have always been associated with his name: the so-called 'della Robbia works,' produced in his workshop by Luca himself, and above all by his nephew and nephew's sons, in their thousands for a whole century to be distributed over Florence and Tuscany, and, to a less degree, over the rest of Italy, and to become famous and eagerly sought after throughout the entire Christian world. That these two lunettes could not have been Luca's first attempts of the kind, as M. Reymond thinks, is evident from the fact that they show us the technique of the artist already at its zenith.

The enormous popularity of these works was rooted first of all in two practical reasons: they were inexpensive and they were weatherproof. We see from the contract with the Opera del Duomo concerning the above-mentioned 'Ascension' relief that Luca undertook to deliver it at an early date (in three months), and asked a very moderate sum. The tinted clay reliefs which had hitherto done duty, particularly in Florence, for marble where the means were insufficient for the nobler material had the disadvantage, especially when placed on the outside of buildings, of suffering from atmospheric influences and gradually falling to pieces. Luca hit upon the idea of applying to his clay reliefs, after tinting, a coat of that glaze just introduced into Florence with the new impetus to the majolica industry; he then fired the clay once more, and so rendered it impervious to the weather. He succeeded in preparing several colours, especially those usually employed in the painting of marble—as white, sky-blue for the background, green, yellow, and brown for the landscape foreground, also violet and mauve—which remained pure and intense in the firing and obtained an extremely delicate and even glaze. On this the gilding was applied after the manner of the tinted marble sculptures in patterns on the background, on the robes, for the haloes and the framework. On the frame—composed of the same material and likewise coloured—he expended the same care and ingenuity as on the composition itself. The flower or fruit garland which had become the rule for wood frames, and was

often used, too, in marble and bronze frameworks, he shaped or painted with a diversity and taste, a keen observation of nature and delicate sense of æsthetic fitness never attained before or since. Only in these boldly coloured frames do his softly tinted reliefs achieve their full effect. The artist's charm and the technical perfection of these ornamental details brought him important commissions for architectural decoration where vigorous colouring was in place: such as friezes, ceilings, and floorings, which, to judge by what remains of them, he designed and carried out in an equally masterly manner. The artistic possibilities of these wonderful colour effects, doubtless, had much to do with Luca's choice of medium, but it was not his only reason. Equally important was the fact that by this means the artist could embody his ideas with his own hand almost as they presented themselves, whereas with marble or bronze this freshness of impression is more or less dissipated in its passage through other and, as a rule, less skilful hands.

In the arduous task of separating from the mass of Robbia productions such works as may be referred to Luca himself, we gain reliable assistance from the authenticated works in marble and bronze, but, above all, from the official records and from Vasari's statements, which carry the more weight in that he was personally acquainted with Andrea della Robbia. The two large reliefs over the Sacristy doors of 1443 and 1446 (the latter not completed till 1450) are particularly important from their finely balanced and, for Luca, unusually rich composition. Under the classic repose a subtle animation makes itself felt; moreover, the 'Resurrection' relief displays a strong realistic tendency in the marked foreshortening and the vivid contrast between the rude soldiery and the transfigured image of the Christ. The 'Ascension' is noteworthy for the affinity of its figures with those of the bronze doors in process of execution at the same time, though in the more decorative work they are less distinctive and careful than in the doors.

Two years later than the 'Ascension,' Luca prepared for the Duomo two more works in glazed clay—the sole authentic free figures of his in this material—two 'Kneeling Angels' holding candelabra (Plate XXXVIII.), for which he received in 1457 the sum of 90 lire. These figures are now in the old Sacristy. They are eminently beautiful in attitude and modelling, alike in the flowing lines of the

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LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

KNEELING ANGELS WITH CANDELABRA

Old Sacristy, Duomo, Florence

Alinari

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ADORING ANGELS

Via dell' Agnolo, Florence

drapery and the devotional expression of the lovely portrait-like faces.

Luca's connection with the builder and bronze-caster, Maso di Bartolommeo, with whom he collaborated in the execution of the bronze doors, brought him soon afterwards—1449—another order of the same nature: the lunette over the porch of S. Domenico in Urbino, of which Maso had built the façade. The Virgin holding the Child, who stands in front of her, is accompanied by four Saints of the Dominican Order, figures instinct with religious sentiment, the faces distinctive and spiritualised; the Virgin of almost stern grandeur, the drapery ample and flowing.

This exhausts the tale of Luca's officially authenticated works in glazed clay now extant. Vasari, a particularly reliable authority, accounts for a good many others whose authorship by Luca is attested by every visible sign. The dates of these, as with all Luca's glazed works, can only be approximately given, for not only do the few dated pieces—with the exception of a coat of arms—all belong to the artist's middle period (between 1443 and 1446), but the collaboration of Luca's nephew Andrea during the later decades adds to the difficulty of settling the question. M. Reymond's plan of using the frames as a guide is no use either, since few of these are dated and Luca was perpetually inventing new designs for them.

First of all there are two lunettes we may be quite sure of, similar to the larger one in Urbino, both depicting the 'Virgin and Child between Adoring Angels.' In the one of these high reliefs, still in its original situation above a low door in the Via dell' Agnolo (Plate XXXIX.), the Christ Child, who, as in the Urbino relief, holds in his hand a scroll inscribed EGO SVM LVX MVNDI, is completely draped. Youthful angel figures hold vases with lilies on either side; the drapery, and even the composition, is still lacking in freedom and assurance in the flow of lines; the figures have not yet the individuality and diversity of the groups in the Duomo and in Urbino. We cannot go wrong, therefore, in placing this work earlier than those—that is, before 1443. The second lunette mentioned by Vasari was transferred a little while ago to the Bargello on the pulling down of the Mercato Vecchio. Here the Virgin holds the nude Infant, who, half-wrapped in her mantle, raises his right hand in benediction while two adoring angels hover on either side. The Virgin's

beautiful face wears a dreamy look, in keeping with the devotional expression of the angels. Here again the modelling of the drapery is by no means so bold and easy as in the reliefs in the bronze doors or those above the Sacristies, so that we must place the production of this work also in the earlier period. The garland of flowers is almost exactly similar to that surrounding the lunette in the Via dell' Agnolo, but the architectonic bordering, which in the latter frames the garland above and below, appears in the Bargello lunette only on the inner side. The angels in the first lunette were on a somewhat smaller scale than the Madonna and Child, but here the disproportion is far greater, the Virgin and Child being nearly as large again as the angels. Note, too, that in both lunettes the figures either emerge from or float on clouds.

Vasari names further as Luca's work the ceilings of Michelozzo's 'Tabernacle of S. Croce' in S. Miniato and of Antonio Rossellino's Mausoleum for Cardinal John of Portugal in the same church. As collaborators in these and similar works Vasari mentions Agostino and Ottaviano, whom he takes to be Luca's brothers, whereas they were the sons of a certain Duccio, and probably never had any connection with Luca della Robbia. Agostino, who alone is known to fame, being in early youth suspected of theft, was obliged to flee from Florence, and afterwards proved himself a very versatile and productive artist in Rimini and Perugia, but his methods are totally different from Luca's and he knew nothing of the famous glaze. Luca's principal assistant in his later works was his nephew Andrea, born 1435, whom in his will he calls his pupil, and who remained in Luca's workshop till his uncle's death and carried on the work afterwards. The date of the panelled ceiling, with its purely architectonic decoration, in Michelozzo's 'Sacellum' coincides, probably, with that of the contract with Michelozzo—1448—for the erection of that graceful marble edifice. Similarly the ceiling for the Mausoleum Chapel of the young, lately deceased Archbishop of Florence, Prince John of Portugal, may be assumed to lie between 1461, when Antonio Rossellino received the order for the erection of the edifice and tomb, and the opening of the Chapel in 1466. This ceiling is admirable in design and colouring, as in the four figures of the 'Cardinal Virtues' in the tondi at the corners. In these lovely heads of classical beauty, in the flowing lines of the vesture which drapes the chaste young forms and yet reveals their

noble contours and dignified movement, Luca has created figures of a perfection never excelled by the Renaissance, and no less pure in character than the finest productions of Greek plastic art. The master, who was then in the middle of the sixties, stands here at the very zenith of his powers.[1]

A still more considerable order of the same nature was entrusted to the artist in the decoration of the cupola of the Cappella Pazzi. Vasari ascribes all the glazed decoration inside and out to Luca, an opinion which the date of production and the character of the work join in confirming. Certain portions, no doubt, show traces of Andrea's assisting hand. The small vaulted roof of the entrance is, in its purely ornamental decoration, closely akin to that of Michelozzo's 'Sacellum' in S. Miniato, and dates, no doubt, likewise from the middle of the century. The majestic, splendidly draped figure over the door into the chapel of the 'Almighty' (M. Reymond calls it 'St. Andrew') enthroned on clouds with a cross in the right hand and backed by a coloured aureole would be contemporary with the outer cupola. The ceiling of the interior is adorned with round reliefs let into the stone, without the usual glazed framework, having colossal figures of the 'Evangelists' seated on clouds, their symbols beside them, and occupied in writing down the Gospels. On the walls are figures in relief of the 'Apostles' under life size and also seated on clouds. Between the 'Evangelists' and the 'Apostles' there is an essential contrast, not only through the former being very richly and brilliantly coloured while the latter, like the rest of Luca's figures hitherto described, are simply white on a blue ground with some addition of gold,—the difference lies equally in the character of the figures. Whereas the 'Apostles' are plain, homely figures, pleasing in form but in no way remarkable, with ample but somewhat restless folds of drapery, the 'Evangelists' are of heroic proportions, the handling of the drapery is simple yet imposing, and there is an arresting gravity in the broadly conceived, almost harsh faces.

This contrast is patent also to M. Reymond. He explains it by saying that the Apostles belong to Luca's middle period, the 'Evangelists' to his latter years; only thus could the superiority of the

[1] Of the two alto-rilievo figures in glazed clay of 'Justice' and 'Temperance' in the Musée Cluny, very similar in composition to the corresponding figures in S. Miniato, the first is a rather insipid copy out of Luca's workshop, while 'Temperance,' particularly in the modelling of the head, is reminiscent rather of some artist like A. Pollaiuolo.

'Evangelists' be intelligible, for otherwise 'il faut renoncer à trouver dans le développement de son art aucun principe d'évolution méthodique.' Now it is just as the productions of his seventies that these reliefs would be unintelligible, both in the sequence of the master's works and in the history of the art of the period. Luca's art developed along the same lines from the sublime to the naturalistic, thence to a more all-pervading beauty and delicate charm. The 'Evangelists,' faintly Gothic in their typical formation and rude majesty, in their simplicity and slight deviations from uniformity, in symmetry of arrangement and position, and in the formal treatment of their symbols, have still so much of the grand style of the Early Renaissance, as, for instance, we meet in Donatello's 'St. John' in the Duomo and Ghiberti's 'St. Matthew' in Orsanmichele, that it is not surprising that so keen a connoisseur as K.E. von Liphart should refer the design to the builder of the Cappella Pazzi—Brunelleschi. Only as an early work of Luca's can the significance of these reliefs be apprehended. Not of course as works of his actual youth—we know of none—but of somewhere in the thirties, when the Cantoria too was produced. The building of the chapel which Brunelleschi began in 1429 or 1430 must by the middle of the thirties have been ready for the decoration of the interior, for early in 1443 Andrea Pazzi was able to entertain Pope Eugenius IV. in a room over the chapel. The twelve 'Apostles,' on the other hand, are quite obviously of much later date, ordered from Luca and doubtless sketched out by him, but the hand of Andrea is very apparent in the execution of the graceful but somewhat effeminate figures, the diversified and yet characterless heads, the almost trivial treatment of the hair and beard, the full but restless drapery and the superficial modelling of the extremities. Thus exactly do we know Andrea in the many authenticated works of his early and middle period. In short, it is just in the seventies, where M. Reymond places the 'Evangelists,' that we must put these Apostle reliefs modelled by Andrea in Luca's workshop. That they were completed before 1478 is made indubitable by the conspiracy and consequent ruin of the Pazzi in that year. Again, the rich colouring of the 'Evangelists' is a proof, not of their late but early creation, for, like Florentine plastic art in general, Luca uses colour less and less as time goes on, while the figures of his successor, Andrea, are invariably entirely white.

About the same time as these Apostles the decoration for the

ceiling of a chapel in S. Giobbe in Venice probably issued from Luca's workshop. As the interior building of the church was not taken in hand till 1471 this ceiling cannot well be dated before 1475, and for that reason alone the execution must necessarily have been left chiefly to the apprentices of the septuagenarian artist. The spiritless composition of the 'Evangelist' figures in the tondo reliefs grouped round the Almighty, and the coarse modelling show that Luca is not answerable for either design or execution, though his workmen have done their best to follow in his footsteps. Between these 'Evangelists' and those of the Cappella Pazzi there is an enormous gap both in time and style, and yet M. Reymond would have us consider them as contemporary productions and by the same hand.

Vasari names Luca della Robbia as the author, besides, of some decorative pieces: the arms of the Guilds over the niches in Orsanmichele and the study of Piero de' Medici in the Palazzo Medici. The former must be Luca's work, from the date of their production. The arms of the Guild of Physicians—a Madonna in a flower-garden under a tabernacle—does not belong to the best of Luca's creations, among which M. Reymond reckons it. The position of the tabernacle in the tondo and of the ornamental arch directly upon the slender pillars is not very happy in architectural effect; the Virgin's expression is almost sullen, and yet lacks the accustomed breadth and grandeur; the proportions of the figure are not good, and the awkward pose of the nude, expressionless child is far from advantageous. The drapery, however, is broadly and artistically treated. From all of which I take the work to be of fairly early date, about 1440, whereas M. Reymond puts it at 1455 to 1460. The arms of the Guild of Merchants (Plate XL.) over Verrocchio's 'Christ and St. Thomas' can be exactly dated, for in 1459 the *Parte Guelfa* had been obliged to surrender the place to that Guild who ordered this beautiful device in 1462. In its shape and the manner in which the fruit and flowers in the encircling wreath are bound together, it shows close affinity to the vases of fruit round the Evangelists in S. Giobbe at Venice and the two Serristori coats of arms, to which we shall refer presently—therefore with the later works of Luca or from his workshop. The third coat of arms mentioned by Vasari, that of the Guild of Stonemasons on the north side of Orsanmichele, is noteworthy in that it is composed entirely of painted and glazed terra-

cotta plaques. Luca's artistic taste in the disposition and designing of the ornaments and his fine instinct for the picturesque are here most happily displayed. The base of the Peretola tabernacle, which is similarly treated, resembles this closely in the scheme of colour, while the flowers and fruit are akin in style to that of Donatello's early and middle period, for instance, the background of the 'Annunciation' relief in S. Croce. Hence we must certainly place this coat of arms before the middle of the century—about 1440 or shortly afterwards—whereas M. Reymond, on the strength of his imagined development of the artist's colour scheme, puts it down as a late work.

We shall meet with this style of painted decoration oftenest in Luca's frames, but there exist one or two examples to show that he also treated the picture in the same manner. In the Museo dell' Opera is a small lunette of a door in which not only the fruit wreath forming the frame, but the picture within—the half-length figure of the Almighty between two angels—is simply painted on flat terra-cotta plaques and then glazed. The somewhat shapeless figures, especially the angels with their curious type of face, the clumsy attitudes and the thick, disordered, flaxen hair have little in common with Luca's plastic figures; rather do they exhibit, as I pointed out years ago in the *Cicerone*, the character of the naturalistic painters of the middle of the century such as Alesso Baldovinetti. If Luca, having little skill in painting, retains here so little of his own character, the experiment must belong to the early part of his career, certainly before the middle of the century, and not to the master's closing years (as M. Reymond will have it, who has no hesitation in recognising it as Luca's work). But there are other examples of similar 'paintings' from Luca's workshop, namely the blue in blue-painted and glazed medallions on which the 'Months' are represented each by a peasant engaged in the field work appropriate to the season. In the Victoria and Albert Museum, as in the Gigli-Campana Collection (as part of which they were acquired), they are described as part of the decoration of Piero de' Medici's study which Vasari enumerates among the works of Luca. Vasari is, however, mistaken in mentioning Piero as having given the commission. It was Cosimo who engaged Luca to decorate the room according to his own peculiar technique, as we learn from the account of Luca's somewhat younger compatriot Filarete in the *Trattato*. The London

medallions undoubtedly belonged to the decoration of a small living-room, and can only have issued from Luca's workshop, as the technique and costume prove conclusively. Why they 'cannot be by Luca' nor 'worthy to be ascribed to him,' as runs the verdict of M. Reymond, who is also completely at fault in their date, is more than I can understand. Decidedly there were few such delicate decorations at that period, perhaps, indeed, this was the only one, and that is why Filarete and Vasari mention it so expressly. The figures (Filarete particularly describes those on the walls), in their tasteful arrangement, bold contours, and beautiful folds of drapery, show all the points of similar work by Luca,—for instance, the unfinished marble reliefs in the Bargello. For this reason, as also from the character of the inscription, and compared also with similar figures in the paintings of this period, particularly those by Pesellino, these tondi may with confidence be regarded as dating from the middle of the Quattrocento. And this was exactly when Luca was engaged in decorating the *istudietto* of the aged Cosimo.

To these works named by Vasari several others—among them some notable glazed terra-cottas—may be judged as having issued from Luca's workshop, and moreover, to judge by their character and general excellence, from Luca's own hand. To begin with there is the coat of arms (surely only accidentally omitted by Vasari) for the Guild of Silk Weavers in Orsanmichele (Plate XL.), a medallion with two angels holding a door between them framed in a peculiarly beautiful garland of fruit. The two boy-angels standing on clouds with their clustering curls and lovely faces are a couple of delicious figures, nearly related to Andrea's *Bambini* on the façade of the Innocenti, only still more delicately animated, more alive than they. The glaze as well as the treatment of the fruit garland point to the production of the work before Andrea's time, probably about the middle of the century. Two other large works follow closely the lunettes in the National Museum at Florence, both also lunettes, and again representing the 'Virgin and Child between adoring Angels.' One is in the Berlin Museum; another, much damaged, was recently in private possession in Tuscany.

In Luca's own work will be included the two escutcheons lately sold to the Marchese Serristori in the old Pazzi-Quaratesi Palace. The palace is ascribed to Brunelleschi, but as it was not begun till 1445, the year before Brunelleschi's death, he can, at most, have

provided only the plan. As the building of the court and the adjacent rooms was not carried out till the sixties (1462-1470) these two escutcheons of the Pazzi and of the Serristori (presumably because the wife of the then owner was a Serristori), which adorned the ceiling of the hall at the side of the court, must date from those years. At all events they were executed before 1478, for, consequent on the Pazzi conspiracy, the palace was then confiscated by the Medici, the field of the escutcheon mutilated, and the three *palle* of the Medici rudely clapped on to it. In the manner in which the arms are laid on a species of thick ribbed shell and in the modelling of the wreath, they closely resemble and are in every point equal to the arms of the Guild of Merchants in Orsanmichele ordered from Luca in 1462. The largest and handsomest escutcheon by Luca still extant was executed likewise for the Pazzi family and came to the Victoria and Albert Museum in the Gigli-Campana Collection from their villa near Florence. It bears the arms of King René of Anjou (who had close relations with the Pazzi), with the King's initials and those of his consort Isabella, who died in 1453. About 1452 Jacopo de' Pazzi was made a Knight of the 'Luna' Order which René had re-instituted in 1448, and in 1453 René entered into an alliance with Florence. It was during this period of their intimate connection, and probably just before the death of Isabella, that this escutcheon was executed by Luca. That, against this documentary evidence, M. Reymond should 'from considerations of *Stilkritik*' put the date at ten years later, is merely because his misty fabric of the artist's development, built up of imagination and false deductions, would otherwise vanish into thin air.

To Carucci and Allan Marquand is due the credit of having directed attention to a couple of extensive and notable works by Luca della Robbia in the Church of Impruneta near Florence. The two great marble baldachins by Michelozzo supported on four pillars on either side of the choir were handed over by him for decoration to his friend Luca, with whom for many years he was in the habit of collaborating. For the one Luca did the 'Tabernacle,' for the other the figures beside Michelozzo's marble 'Tabernacle,' but only one received its decorative ornament from him. Unfortunately we are ignorant of the history of these important monuments, so that as regards the share of each artist and the date of production we can only fall back on evidences of *Stilkritik*. It is almost unani-

Alinari

ARMS OF THE GUILD OF SILK-WEAVERS
Orsanmichele, Florence

Alinari

ARMS OF THE GUILD OF MERCHANTS
Orsanmichele, Florence

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA AND MICHELOZZO

ALTAR OF THE HOLY CROSS

Church of the Madonna dell' Impruneta, near Florence

mously acknowledged that Michelozzo must have been the architect of the two baldachins, also that the marble altar of the Madonna 'Tabernacle' was carried out from his designs; of this the authenticated works leave no doubt. When M. Reymond brings forward this altar as the chief witness for Michelozzo's sole authorship of the niche in Orsanmichele in which Verrocchio's 'St. Thomas' group now stands, and in which, following Schmarsow's lead, he allows Donatello no part, he evidently does not see that the altar in question is merely a feeble and in parts baroque version (for instance the looped-up marble valance) of Donatello's imposing niche, in the execution of which, as in many other of that master's works, Michelozzo assisted. When M. Reymond goes further and proclaims Michelozzo as the real reformer who first introduced (about 1440) the pure antique into Italian architecture, he underrates Brunelleschi as much as he does Donatello, and forgets that Michelozzo, wherever he works independently of his great associates —in Montepulciano, in Milan, in Ragusa—is very far from exhibiting a strictly classical or indeed pure style of any kind, especially in the decorations, but rather follows the fashion of the various places, employing now Gothic, now overladen Renaissance, motives. By far the greater part of the honours heaped upon him alone by Schmarsow and M. Reymond belong to his predecessors and his associates. The vexed question of Donatello's record as architect and decorator cannot be settled in a few offhand sentences, or by simply putting Michelozzo in his place; the more so that we know that Donatello's contemporaries always turned to him in matters of architectural importance, and invariably, when he collaborated with architects such as Michelozzo, treated him as the head of the enterprise (cf. Chap. I.).

Luca's own works in this church at Impruneta are the relief figures 'SS. Paul and Mark' at each side of Michelozzo's marble altar, and, as the pendant to it, the painted and glazed throne-altar of the Holy Cross with relief figures of the 'Baptist and S. Ambrosius,' and the base with angels flying from both sides towards the Ciborium; (Plate XLI.) finally the oval-shaped alto-rilievo 'Pietà' below the Cross and the decoration of the baldachin over the altar of the Madonna. The figures are all white on a blue ground, whereas the architectural parts, plastic as well as painted, are richly coloured. Judged merely by the formal accordances these works would have to agree in date

with the 'Tabernacle' at Peretola—1442—for it and the 'Tabernacle of the Holy Cross' are almost facsimiles both in structure and detail. Yet the latter, most elegant in its proportions, is entirely of terra-cotta, and the painting (in the decoration of the pilasters too) carried out in the purest style of majolica decoration. The figures of the saints excel those of the 'Apostles' in the 'Ascension' relief in the Duomo of 1446, especially as regards the modelling of the heads, and are nearer the 'Apostles' of the Pazzi chapel. From this and other indications we may set these works down as dating from about 1460; also, perhaps, from the circumstance that the architecture was not quite finished, which would find its explanation in Michelozzo's departure from Florence.

In the 'Pietà below the Cross' (Plate XLII.), now very unfortunately placed and in a baroque frame, a more strident and dramatic note is struck in the mourning figures of the Virgin and St. John and the wailing angels hovering beside the Cross than we are accustomed to in Luca's work. Both the lower figures, but especially the St. John, have something stiff and theatrical in expression and attitude, while the lamentation of the angels is natural and convincing. The Christ is a figure of such matchless dignity, such beauty of form and delicacy of finish, as can hardly be equalled in the whole range of the art of the Quattrocento. Even Luca himself scarcely reached again such a pinnacle of perfection in beauty of composition, flow of line, grandeur of pose and drapery, exquisite harmony of colour and enamel. The same may be said of the flying angels in the base of the altar (Plate XLI.). In the symmetry and flow of line, in their devout approach to the Holy of Holies, their marvellously graduated attitude and expression according to their position in the group; in the beauty of each individual head and youthful figure, in graceful disposition of the drapery, and in perfection of modelling, these angels stand unmatched among Luca's works,—almost, one might say, among all the works of the Renaissance. Comparing this with the 'Pietà' relief one recognises definitely that Luca's was the lyric, not the dramatic Muse.

Luca's decorative work in the Church of Impruneta was to have included the vaulting and the ornamentation of both Michelozzo's baldachins. This was actually carried out only on the baldachin above the altar of the Madonna; the plaster relief with *putti*, now occupying the hollows in the frieze of the other baldachin originally

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LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

CRUCIFIXION

Church of the Madonna dell' Impruneta, near Florence

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LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA OF THE ROSE BOWER

Museo Nazionale, Florence

intended for Luca's fruit festoons, are crude specimens of late seventeenth-century work, not Early Renaissance as M. Reymond assumes. At the ceiling corners of the completed baldachin are beautifully formed rosettes with fir cones, in allusion to the original site of the church to which the place owes its name—Impruneta, 'in Pineta.' Into Michelozzo's admirably finished framework a frieze of boldly coloured, very tastefully composed ropes of fruit is let in all round similar to those surrounding the Pazzi escutcheon in the Palazzo Quaratesi. Of peculiar interest are the two Madonna reliefs—half-length figures with the Child in her arms—let into the frieze (apparently quite at random) close beside one another on the side next the baldachin over the altar of the Holy Cross. The reliefs are facsimile save in a few minor details. The Virgin holds the Child, who leans against her, in her arms, and gently droops her head above him; both seem rapt in an ecstasy of mutual love —a very dream of perfect motherhood. As the sole authentic composition of the Madonna and Child—except the full-length Madonna in Orsanmichele—this work is of the utmost value in the investigation of the claims of the countless unauthenticated Madonna representations. There are a few copies in glazed terra-cotta in the Louvre and, particularly good, in the possession of W. V. Dirksen in Berlin, as also in plaster and *papier mâché*. One of the latter in the Berlin Museum I made known to the public as a composition of Luca della Robbia's before I knew of the originals in Impruneta. Now, instead of congratulating me on having recognised the master's hand aright, M. Reymond scoffs at me for taking this for the original. It is true that I did not expressly describe the plaster cast as a copy, because I took it for granted that any one interested in Italian plastic art would know that these plaster reliefs are invariably copies—either contemporary with the artist or from later periods. In the case of M. Reymond I was evidently at fault here; but even for his benefit I do not care to repeat what may be found in every handbook, and what every teacher tells his pupils at the outset when dealing with the plastic art of the Quattrocento.

With the works here described the list of Luca della Robbia's productions, as far as I have been able to ascertain from documents, from the period of their execution, and from reliable contemporary witnesses, is exhausted. The large majority of smaller pieces, only

to be judged by their affinity to the already named works of the master and by their divergencies from the productions of his successors, more especially those of his nephew, pupil, and assistant Andrea della Robbia, are Madonna reliefs in the style of the two on the baldachin frieze in Impruneta. A whole series of these are to be found to the present day in Italy, a few in their original situation, the majority in the Bargello. I need only make a rapid survey of these works, as they are almost unanimously declared to be Luca's; even Marcel Reymond agrees with most of our decisions. But first a word as to the differences between Luca's Madonnas and those of Andrea.

Luca's Maries possess to a specially high degree the same beauty of symmetry and grace as all his figures. Starting from some definite model he succeeds in imparting to it an ideal dignity, and thus his renderings of the relation between Mother and Child, intimate, tender, and infinitely human as they are, never descend to actual 'genre.' The face is a full oval, with regular features, of tender and soulful expression; the hair is lightly waved, drawn back from the face, and not infrequently confined by a fillet. The hands are particularly beautiful, with long slender fingers. The folds of the dress and the mantle, which is often drawn over the head, are large and simple, but always follow the line of movement. The Child, a beautiful boy of about two, is of delicate but healthy build and not overladen with detail, full of artless charm and the clinging affection of childhood. In the larger compositions he is invariably turned towards the congregation as if in benediction; in the smaller Madonna reliefs in a hundred different ways he turns caressingly to his Mother, leans on her bosom or clings fondly to her. Andrea's figures derive straight from his master; he repeats them after his own fashion, and under his hand they tend to become monotonous and insipid. In his Madonna renderings the Virgin, always seated, is a charming youthful figure with pretty features; the mantle drawn over the head falls open in front to show the girdled dress, the folds are less broadly treated and with greater detail. The Child is almost always nude and fatter than with Luca, with a large head and conspicuously short legs, and, when he stands, has one hip very much pushed up. The compositions are invariably 'genre' in style, nevertheless they are not so true to nature and far less diversified

than those of Luca. If in his grouping of the figures he shows little of the imaginative power of his teacher, in the framework all sense of architectonic fitness is lost; even in copying Luca's subjects he misses the finer points, not having inherited his uncle's pictorial genius any more than his other gifts. With both artists the Madonnas are white on a blue ground; but Luca frequently animates the background and the usually plain-painted framework with tasteful patterns in several colours or with gilding which he extends to the borders of the robe or the hair, though this seldom remains, and if so only in patches. Andrea employed the gilding for the majority of his Madonnas, at any rate for the earlier ones. It is only in his early period, too, that Andrea approaches his uncle in his enamel-like glaze and beautiful colouring. Allan Marquand seeks to establish certain differences in the colouring of the eyes and eyebrows, but this, I think, can hardly be maintained, for from my own observations Luca gives his figures now blue, now brown eyes, and Andrea, in his earlier works, at any rate, faithfully follows suit. A curious difference may be noted between the groups of the two artists; whereas Luca, following the natural practice, places the Child on the left of the Mother, Andrea places it on the right. This became such a confirmed habit with the artists that among more than one hundred of their Madonna compositions you will find but very few exceptions. Even in the 'Adoration of the Child,' this position is not altered.

Among those of Luca's representations of the Madonna and Child still remaining in Italy, about the earliest is the Madonna in the Innocenti. This is a half-length figure, the Child, as so often occurs with Luca, holding before it a scroll with the inscription, EGO SVM LVX MVNDI. Pose and expression are somewhat constrained, the Child, both in movement and contour, is akin to that of the Madonna in Orsanmichele; interesting from the little touches of gilding still in good preservation; it was carried out undoubtedly before 1450, probably at the beginning of the forties. Luca's masterpieces in this respect are now all in the Bargello, most of them grouped round the Madonna lunette from S. Pierino. A marvellous creation is the 'Madonna of the Rose Bower' (Plate XLIII.); full-length figures in massive high relief, in which the Child, holding up an apple in the right hand, turns in the Virgin's arms to

pluck a rose. Rarely has Luca himself attained to such noble simplicity as in the modelling of these figures and the treatment of drapery, while the perfect preservation of the enamel and the delicate tinting contribute not a little towards the radiant effect of this incomparable relief. Judged in comparison with the dated works this—despite its 'genre'-like character—grave and noble composition cannot well have been produced before 1450, but also not much later. This also applies to the enchanting alto-rilievo (Plate XLIV.) in which the Child carried on the Madonna's left arm holds an apple tight in both little hands and turns round a little as if startled. In a third composition, in which the Virgin presses the Child to her while he throws an arm about her neck, the heads are most individual, the expression gayer, the handling of the folds more detailed. We cannot, therefore, be far out in assigning the relief, like the two very similar Madonnas in Impruneta, to an advanced period, say about 1460. Of this group, as of those in Impruneta, there are several repetitions varying very little from one another. One—the only one mentioned by Reymond—is the above-mentioned relief in the Bargello, the Virgin's head unfortunately somewhat damaged; a second was bought in the sale of the Eastlake Collection for the Berlin Museum; while a third copy, in which the Child's head is particularly full of character and seems distinctly influenced by Donatello, is now in Herr G. Benda's Collection in Vienna, and a fourth one, the finest of all, in the possession of Dr. Eduard Simon in Berlin. That these are Luca's own handiwork is proved by the fine shades of difference between them.

Herewith M. Reymond thinks to have closed the list of Luca della Robbia Madonnas now in Italy. I do not agree with him. To begin with, the Bargello possesses a tondo, a half-length Madonna holding the nude Child at her side floating upwards out of clouds attended by two adoring angels. Reymond gives this composition to Andrea, who is supposed to have executed it at about the same time as he was engaged upon the lunette over the door of the Prato Cathedral (1489). Herein M. Reymond errs by about forty years, for the affinity of this relief with the Madonna of S. Pierino is patent to the most casual observer. The Madonna emerging from clouds and the angels being only half the size of the sacred figures are traits we find in the compositions of hardly any

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA AND CHILD

Museo Nazionale, Florence

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

other artist than Luca, whose characteristic types and drapery these figures also possess, whereas they are not the least reminiscent of Andrea. That the garland in the frame of this relief is much too inferior to be Luca's is no argument against his authorship, seeing that the whole frame is too large and therefore not the original one. Even the assumption that this—as frequently happens—is merely the 'school' copy of a lost original is quite unnecessary. These contemporary replicas were, as a rule, prepared by an assistant, and only the finishing touches supplied by the master. One argument M. Reymond himself advances against Andrea's authorship of this Madonna: 'c'est peut-être la seule Madonne d'André, dont la figure soit vue de face.' This is to worry himself needlessly, since on the very same page as this he puts a photograph of Andrea's authenticated lunette at Prato showing the figure of the Madonna completely full face; which is also the case with several other Madonnas which M. Reymond himself acknowledges to be Andrea's.

To this tondo of the Madonna with adoring angels a small round relief showing the Virgin carrying the (draped) Child on her left arm bears strong affinity. Closed in a fond embrace and quite oblivious of the devout beholder, Mother and Child gaze at one another in rapture. Grouping, types, the fashion of the hair and the robes, the modelling of the beautiful hands and their action are all very characteristic of Luca; by which and the ample folding of the drapery the date of the composition must be about 1450. The representation must have been a very favourite one, as it occurs with comparative frequency in plaster and even in stone copies. I know of only one in glazed terra-cotta, from its careless execution probably a 'workshop' copy. Till recently it was in the hands of a dealer in Florence. There is a stone copy of this Madonna in the frieze of a door of the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova, which shows traits of Michelozzo, and certainly was not carved later than 1460, proving the composition to be Luca's without a doubt. However, there is another copy which fixes the date still more surely. This is to be found in the ceiling of a room in the Monastery of S. Maria in Castello at Genoa decorated with frescoes in 1451 by Justus de Alemagna.

From the collection of the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova another small Madonna relief was recently acquired for the Florence Museums. The Madonna is entirely *en face*, on her left arm she carries the Child (draped), who plays with the fingers of her right

hand, and like the Mother looks straight out of the picture. The old wooden frame has the familiar features of Luca's tabernacles. Types, drapery, and modelling point to Luca, of whom too the rich, usually well-preserved gilding, especially in the curious pattern on the background, is very characteristic. The very upright pose, the more typical forms and the impersonal gravity of the gaze of both Mother and Child lead one to class this as an early work—about 1440. One point is particularly noteworthy, and that is the toning down of the background—both the blue of the glaze and the gold pattern—with a wash of greyish white, whereby the colours are rendered far less glaring in effect than in the 'cleaned' condition in which all the other Robbia works have come down to us. One cannot help wondering if this toning down was the rule with Luca's glazed terra-cotta works.

The Bargello contains among several Adorations of the Child one which, in the quiet yet skilled composition, the colouring and enamel, the beautiful figures of the Virgin and the Child, and the three singing and adoring angels, as well as in the treatment and tinting of the clouds, proclaims itself as Luca's. Even to the lay eye, familiar with but few of the great master's works, this relief must at once appear strangely incongruous in M. Reymond's book among reproductions of similar motives by Andrea, in the new edition even described as 'imitation du style d'Andrea.' Even the inscription in Gothic lettering 'Gloria in Excelsis' on the music scroll of the singing angel—a charming boy who might have been taken bodily out of the marble reliefs of the Cantoria—is not missing.

About forty years ago, some time in the seventies, a large Madonna relief, which M. Reymond too ascribes to Luca, passed from the Marchese Viviani della Robbia, a descendant of the Robbia family, into the Demidoff Collection at S. Donato and thence out of Italy—I do not know where. It is a half-length figure of the Virgin rising out of clouds, looking down at the Child standing at her side holding an apple in his left hand. In the modelling and careful finish of the details it is akin to the Madonna of Orsanmichele, and is probably contemporary with that work—the early forties.

According to M. Reymond there is no single Madonna relief outside Italy which can be ascribed to Luca. I believe, on the contrary,

that there are about a dozen genuine works of the artist in glazed clay, and nearly as many in painted terra-cotta or plaster copies. Both Allan Marquand and myself have searched them out laboriously from the chaos of the Robbia works, and taken the utmost pains to examine and prove their claims to authenticity. M. Reymond is unacquainted with the majority of these productions, has not even seen photographs of them all, yet his condemnatory verdict is nevertheless most decided, and he is never at a loss for reasons on which to ground his objections. To show how these objections are built up, I will just give one instance in which M. Reymond brings a great array of learning into the field against the correctness of my judgment of one of these reliefs. It concerns a plaster relief of a Madonna on clouds between two adoring angels remarkable in that it bears a date, bequeathed, with the splendid art treasures of the recently deceased collector, Drury C. Fortnum, to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Plate XLV.). On the back of this relief is faintly scratched, not the 'inscription pompeuse' of which M. Reymond romances, but the notice: '*formato a di* 17 *di gennaio* 1428—*formato nel Gabinetto*(?)—*di Nicholo in gesso.*' With the exception of the word *Gabinetto* the whole inscription is perfectly legible and bears unmistakable evidence of the character of the period, as all who have seen it agree. M. Reymond, who has not seen it, calmly disputes its genuineness (an unworthy aspersion refuted already with well-merited severity by Fortnum), and proceeds to prove that 'it cannot be by Luca, and, moreover, cannot possibly have been produced earlier than the last years of the fifteenth century.'

This he discovers in the angels to begin with; their 'formes delicates' are supposed only to appear in Luca's latest works, an assertion founded on M. Reymond's inaccurate dating and ignorance of the original. The angels, about half the size of the Madonna and Child, are full length (as we have seen, a very marked trait of Luca), and remind one most strongly of the children of the Cantoria reliefs. Furthermore, M. Reymond points out 'two details of the utmost significance': one of the angels has bare feet; *never* did Luca or Ghiberti represent angels with bare feet, for that they were too reverent and too modest. Had M. Reymond not underlined his 'jamais,' with which he is so very free, and not expressly attributed this 'immodest' trait to the end of the fifteenth century, I might have taken it for a printer's error. For you have only to look

through the authenticated works of Ghiberti and Luca to discover the exact opposite of M. Reymond's dictatorial assertion! And if we examine the productions of other contemporary masters we find the same throughout, the exceptions are hardly worth naming. But let us hear the sceptic further: 'De même, dans la Madonne Drury Fortnum les anges n'ont pas d'ailes.' I regret that I am obliged to contradict M. Reymond once more: the angels have got wings.[1] And not only here, but in every other copy I know of, namely a second one in plaster which I saw for sale, another in stamped leather, and the copy in the Berlin Museum with a free rendering of the figure of the Madonna, which I acquired just because it shows how long the original was a well-known favourite with the public. M. Reymond then proceeds: 'Jamais il n'aurait pu venir à la pensée d'un maître travaillant dans la première moitié du XVe siècle de représenter un ange sans ailes.' Although this remark, as we have seen, has no bearing on the relief in question, I would like to ask M. Reymond if then the 'deux anges agenouillés portant des candelabres' in the Duomo at Florence have wings, and if he has never observed that the 'wingless children' of the Cantoria stand on clouds, and that two of the cymbal players are furnished with wings, consequently that Luca intended them for *angels*.

To turn now to the Madonna in whom M. Reymond can discover 'not the least sign of Luca': 'Cette expression molle, efféminée, ces airs penchés, cette allure de belle fille qui fait des grâces, sans dignité, sans le moindre témoignage d'amour maternel . . . on voit qu'Antonio Rossellino a passé par là.' But enough of these criticisms based on what it suited the writer to see in a bad photograph of the original. As a matter of fact, the Madonna in question exhibits all the familiar beautiful traits of Luca's Virgins: the full contour of the face, the wistful dreamy eyes, the waving hair drawn back from a narrow fillet, the well-balanced proportions and the customary attire—a mantle opening over the belted robe and the wide, beautifully handled folds. Why she is not 'seated on a chair' in the clouds, as M. Reymond expects, would surely need no explaining. Still, the objection that she is 'squatting,' which 'never occurs in the first half of the XV. century,' might appear noteworthy at the first glance. But M. Reymond immediately contradicts

[1] Only in the copy in coloured terra-cotta obtained by the Louvre from the Spitzer Collection the wings are omitted. But this is a modern reproduction.

himself by making the naturalistic Donatello school responsible for the introduction of this 'façon trop familière et peu respectueuse d'asseoir.' In various Madonna reliefs of the forties belonging to this school: in the Medici Chapel of S. Croce, a plaster relief in the Berlin Collection, the small bronze Pazzi Madonna of the Louvre, etc., the Virgin sits actually on the ground, and this is the case too in one of the most beautiful of all Luca's Madonna reliefs belonging to Prince Liechtenstein, which we shall come to presently.

This sitting on the ground M. Reymond might perhaps allow to pass, but that she should sit on clouds is 'tout à fait illogique—les anciens maîtres n'ont jamais varié sur ce point—c'est dans la seconde moitié du XVe siècle seulement que nous voyons une transposition unintelligente de ce motif, et la "Madonne del latte" d'Antonio Rossellino est peut-être le premier exemple qu'on en puisse citer.' Indeed, M. Reymond! That he should hereby sacrifice various of the finest and most characteristic of Luca's compositions, or claim them for late works by Andrea (who in this point only once and in a very early production followed his master), causes us no surprise; but has it quite escaped his notice that Luca's best authenticated Madonnas, especially those attended by angels: the Madonnas of the lunettes in the Via dell' Agnolo, of S. Pierino in the Bargello, the Madonna Viviani, etc., though half-length figures, have a thin layer of clouds beneath them, therefore designed by the artist as enthroned on clouds, or that his 'Evangelists' and 'Apostles,' the 'Almighty,' the 'Cardinal Virtues' are all either enthroned or floating on clouds? Had M. Reymond said, 'One of Luca's most striking peculiarities is his preference for seating his sacred and allegorical figures on clouds,' he would have been nearer the mark. Here again Luca borrows direct from the Trecento, which regarded the Virgin above all as the Queen of Heaven, and represented her now enthroned and attended by the heavenly host, now standing in solitary majesty on the crescent moon surrounded by stars. Now, as to the Child—'it belongs neither to Luca's art nor to that of any other artist of 1428,' thus M. Reymond: 'en effet cet enfant est représenté complètement nu, et c'est là une sérieuse présomption pour que l'œuvre soit tardive.' It is no use confronting M. Reymond with the fact that half the children in Luca's Madonna compositions are completely nude, for he is at pains to pronounce these as late works. But if our respected critic would take the trouble to

examine the Pellegrini Madonnas, and those of the other clay-sculptors of Florence who were Luca's direct predecessors (as he kindly concedes), if he would even glance through Alinari's photographs of Donatello's, Michelozzo's, or Portigiani's Madonnas on the tombs in the Battistero, or in the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, etc., he would soon collect a dozen in which the Child is 'complètement nu.' He would not then have been obliged to brand Jacopo della Quercia as the corrupter of morals, and, by dating that artist's Madonna over the main door of S. Petronio, 'about 1438,' have exposed one more joint in his armour. To prove that this thick-set, almost coarsely modelled, child is the genuine offspring of Luca's early manner, I need only compare it with the squatting naked children in two reliefs of the Cantoria which are wellnigh its facsimiles. 'Deux autres arguments'—it is really rather hard, and M. Reymond himself feels he may perhaps have 'insisté trop longuement sur la Madonne Drury Fortnum'—'j'espère que le lecteur voudra me tenir compte de la sincérité que j'apporte dans ces recherches, n'ayant d'autre préoccupation que de découvrir la vérité.' So we must hear him out, I suppose. One of these two absolutely convincing arguments is 'le geste si caractéristique du doigt à la bouche; jamais on ne trouvera un geste si familier, si naturaliste, avant la fin du XVe siècle.' It is not by chance that M. Reymond lays so much stress on this particular detail, for, as we shall presently see, he uses it as a reason for omitting from his works various Madonnas which we have ascribed and shall continue to ascribe to Luca. But how is it with this new reason? Let M. Reymond join me in looking through a number of photographs of early Quattrocento Madonnas. The first we come to is a pure Gothic altar by the sculptor of the Pellegrini Chapel, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Child is so unmannerly as to have two fingers of his left hand in his mouth. A little later in Buggiano's Madonna relief in the altar of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, produced about 1430, the Child displays the same 'geste si familier'; we see it again in Michelozzo's lunette in the façade of S. Agostino at Montepulciano probably of about the same date, and in another of Michelozzo's Madonnas, etc.; it even occurs frequently in the art of the Trecento. Now for the second and last!—reason: 'The Madonna relief is round; but this is not met with till the middle of the XV. century.' He gets over the difficulty of Luca's

authenticated Madonna in Orsanmichele being round by supposing an already existing frame, into which the artist was obliged to insert his relief, and then proceeds to date this early work as being subsequent to 1460, so that Luca may have time to be 'corrupted' by Antonio Rossellino. For the rest, he altogether denies Luca's employment of the tondo form in order to dispossess the master of a number of particularly characteristic reliefs; *Nota bene* only for Madonnas, for that no other artist used that form so often or so skilfully is too well known for even a Reymond to deny.

But apart from Luca—are there in truth no examples of Madonna compositions in tondo form by Luca's forerunners or contemporaries? Donatello's exquisite Madonna in one of the bronze reliefs of the altar of S. Antonio at Padua of the year 1444 is round; his small Madonna between angels and saints in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*circa* 1425) is oval (a form unknown till the baroque period, M. Reymond asserts); one could rapidly pick out half a dozen Madonna reliefs in this form by Michelozzo and the followers of Donatello dating from the thirties and forties; and in conclusion, to mention a picture, Giotto's lovely half-length Madonna in Assisi is a tondo. In short, M. Reymond has once more built his house upon sand.

Herewith I think I have sufficiently analysed his arguments against the authenticity of the Ashmolean della Robbia relief. I leave the verdict to the reader, only advancing, lest it go too hard with M. Reymond, that gentleman's own concluding and extenuating remarks, 'Si je me suis trompé, ma discussion servira au moins de point de départ pour de nouvelles études qu'éclaireront un des points les plus obscurs de l'art italien.' This illuminating process I have achieved, I trust.

And now to touch as briefly as may be on other and, in part, important Madonna reliefs by Luca della Robbia in collections on this side of the Alps. Mme. Edouard André in Paris possesses a half-length 'Madonna and Child' from the Piot Collection. It is nearly related to the Madonna in the Innocenti Hospital, but is still more admirable in dignity of expression, beauty of contour and drapery, finer glaze and perfect preservation. It dates probably from before the middle of the century. Two equally excellent specimens of another Madonna composition, the 'Madonna of the Niche,' are now in America: the smaller one the property of one

of the finest connoisseurs among art collectors I have ever met, Mr. Quincy A. Shaw of Boston; the other was acquired about four years ago from the Gavet Collection in Paris by Mr. Marquand, the father of Professor Allan Marquand, the della Robbia expert, who presented it with the rest of his art treasures to the Metropolitan Museum in New York. M. Reymond ascribes the latter, the only one he is acquainted with, to Andrea, probably to avoid having to ascribe to Luca the tondo in the Bargello, a very similar composition. The shape of the niche is so unusual and so beautiful, the colours are so bright and harmonious, that only Luca could have designed it; with no other artist do we find the same beautiful sea-green and dark blue applied in alternate narrow stripes in the shell-shaped niche. Equally characteristic are the rich gold design and the form of the escutcheon, its frame showing traces of its Gothic derivation. Both copies date probably from the middle of the century.

One of the most beautiful and considerable of Luca's compositions is the 'Adoration of the Child' in the possession of M. Foulc in Paris. The Virgin kneels before the Child lying on the green sward, while behind and above her float four angels. The relief is set in a round frame of fruit and flowers of exquisite arrangement and finish (Plate XLVI.). The angels are closely akin in beauty and devotional expression, in modelling and drapery, to those on the socle of the S. Croce altar in Impruneta. Matchless in dignity and grace, the figure of the kneeling Virgin, modelled almost in the round, stands out against the dark blue ground. Another 'Adoration' was recently bequeathed by Herr Adolph von Beckerath to the Museum of his native city, Crefeld. To the four angels who, as in the Foulc tondo, hover above the Virgin in the clouds and gaze reverently down upon the Child, two more are added here behind the little mound on which the infant Jesus reposes; a true Luca motive full of delicate beauty and sentiment, belonging doubtless to the same period as the above-mentioned relief.

Other Madonna reliefs by Luca, with the full-length figure of the Virgin, are to be found in various parts of the Continent. A delightful composition of this kind, grave and harmonious as it is full of grace and charm, is the low relief 'Madonna of the Lilies,' the property of Prince Liechtenstein. The Virgin, seen in profile, is seated on a cushion on the ground, holding in her lap the nude

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

ADORATION OF THE CHILD

Collection of M. Edmond Foulc, Paris

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA OF THE LILIES

Collection of Prince Liechtenstein, Vienna

Child, who turns round to pluck a lily (Plate XLVII.). The very delicate but only partially preserved gilding, as also several stalks of the lily, have been restored and the blue background proportionately reanimated. A similar small bas-relief, the Virgin in profile to the left seated on the ground, has the grave, wellnigh mournful expression Luca frequently gives to his Madonna groups, probably influenced by Donatello's peculiarly broad, grandiose treatment of the subject. Here, too, the treatment of the drapery and the hair with the fillet and head-covering are quite admirable. The Beckerath copy and that in the Victoria and Albert Museum may with much probability be referred to Luca himself. The Berlin Museum acquired a few years ago a large relief of the 'Virgin seated on Clouds' with the Child in her lap, his hand raised in benediction (Plate XLVIII.). M. Reymond, as if unaware of its present resting-place, still names it after its former owner, the 'Madonna Frescobaldi.' This splendid work, which might be a pendant to the 'Madonna of the Rose Bower' in the Bargello, though graver and more devout in expression, is to him 'simplement une œuvre d'imitation.' Needless to say he has not seen it, but that is no excuse. Any one who has studied the technique of Luca's works will not have a moment's hesitation in deciding that this glaze, tinting and gilding, this quality of the terra-cotta and its style of firing, are only to be found in the best period of the Quattrocento and issuing from Luca's hands alone.[1] But that this Madonna, besides, in its technique exhibits to the full all the familiar traits of Luca's handiwork, is abundantly evident from a glance at the accompanying photograph.

A large clay relief in the Berlin Museum was bought about

[1] To be sure, very few people as yet have been at the pains to examine the technical peculiarities of the Robbia productions. Apropos of M. Reymond's disclaimers I may mention here that the Madonna Frescobaldi was always accounted a genuine Luca, whereas the 'Madonna of the Rose Bower' up till ten years ago was relegated to the store-room of the Uffizi as being a forgery. Happening to see it in a room beside the director's office, I begged him to set up the wonderful thing, whereupon he smiled and asked me to examine it more closely, for it was a forgery. This I did, and offered him then and there 20,000 lire for his 'forgery.' He regretted to be unable to dispose of Government property, but when, a little while afterwards, I returned to Florence, I discovered the relief on the Luca wall in the Bargello. In the same way I was only able to acquire the 'Madonna with the Apple' because its owner and his adviser took it for a forgery, and the two other glazed Madonna reliefs of our collection (cf. pp. 94 and 105). I obtained the one in a great sale at Christie's, the other from Bardini, at prices for which otherwise only the poorest productions of the Robbia *bottega* from the sixteenth century are to be had.

twenty years ago at the Casa Alessandri. It is a lunette for a Gothic gateway arch, for some unknown reason neither glazed nor tinted, and represents the full-length figure of the Madonna between two adoring angels. The double size of the Virgin and Child, the broad faces, the disposition and treatment of hair and drapery, witness convincingly to Luca's style, which even his faithful imitator Andrea only distantly approaches. Among M. Reymond's objections we have so far settled the one against the Virgin sitting on clouds as to regard it rather as a trait particularly characteristic of Luca. A second '*jamais*,' however, is occasioned (also in the case of the Madonna Frescobaldi) by the Virgin having bare feet: this, he says, never occurs till the late Quattrocento. This objection has no intrinsic probability, for being seated in the clouds the Virgin has no call to protect her feet, and for this reason also Luca always presents the Almighty, the Apostles, and the angels in the clouds with bare feet. But apart from that, the objection stands on all fours with M. Reymond's charge of immodesty as regards the feet of the angels, which, instead of 'never,' are nearly 'always' represented bare by Luca and Ghiberti. Those works in which the Virgin has bare feet, M. Reymond of course denies to Luca, so we must apply to his contemporaries for means of refuting this dictum, and there is hardly one among the Florentine clay-modellers who represents the Virgin otherwise than with bare feet, if they are visible at all. This is the case, too, in the 'Annunciation' in Orsanmichele ascribed to Niccolò d'Arezzo, as in countless Madonna reliefs of the Donatello School. Then what remains of M. Reymond's '*jamais*'? But he brings forward yet another of his favourite 'caractères qui me paraissent faits pour rendre suspecte l'attribution à Luca; le geste de la mère qui sourit en chatouillant le cou de son petit enfant.' As, according to him, 'chez Luca' the 'Mother is not permitted to play with her Child,' where this happens M. Reymond denies the authorship of Luca; I would like to point out that Luca's predecessors in the first decades of the Quattrocento and various artists akin to Donatello (for instance, the sculptor of the interesting marble Madonna in a late Robbia altar of the Misericordia at Montepulciano), constantly employ this artless and charming motive. And why should Luca, who stands on the shoulders of these artists and developed under Donatello's influence, as the early reliefs of the Cantoria show most clearly,

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA
MADONNA AND CHILD
Museum, Berlin

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

MADONNA AND CHILD

Museum, Berlin

why should he, than whom no artist ever represented Mother and Child in a greater variety of touching and engagingly natural attitudes, have overlooked this trait? Art undoubtedly has its set laws, both great and small, which it is the business of the art critic to detect and follow up; but all too often those who call themselves the disciples of this science confound these laws with the hedges and wire fences they themselves, in their lack of the fine æsthetic instinct, draw round an artist, and will not let him overstep.

The Berlin Museum possesses a couple of glazed terra-cotta Madonnas of Luca's middle period. The smaller of the two, in a smooth frame painted in green and blue, the pattern and colouring such as we find nowhere but with Luca, is the gift of Count Dönhoff Friedrichstein; a most graceful composition, the Child in the act of embracing the Mother, who holds him up in both hands. 'Bien dans le style de Luca, mais les draperies, trop surchargées et les nus sont tout-à-fait sommaires,' says M. Reymond, but only one who has never seen the relief could so utterly reverse the truth, though owing to clumsy restoration of parts of the glaze, the flesh and the drapery certainly come out disproportionately strong in the photograph.

The other larger relief is the 'Madonna with the Apple,' acquired recently by the Association of the K. Friedrich Museum and handed over to the Berlin Collection. It closely resembles the exquisite, somewhat larger Madonna of the same name in the Bargello, is in similarly faultless preservation and in every other respect of equal beauty. M. Reymond appears to be quite unacquainted with this masterpiece, whereby it has escaped his condemnation, but Adolfo Venturi mentions it in his work *La Madonna*, in which he describes and illustrates all the hereinamed Berlin Madonna reliefs as particularly characteristic works of Luca's; even the Madonna with the draped Child at her side is not, as he states under the photograph, reproduced from the relief in the Bargello, but from that in Berlin.

Several larger compositions with the Madonna, as in the large Urbino lunette surrounded by a small attendant train of saints and angels, have only come down to us in plaster or terra-cotta facsimile.[1]

[1] For further particulars I would refer the reader to my paper in the *Jahrbuch der K. Pr. Kunstsammlungen*, 1885, p. 179 *et seq.*, in which I state at greater length my reasons for assigning these and similar reliefs (some of which, like the Ashmolean Madonna, were ascribed to Ghiberti) to Luca.

These reliefs are small, especially the two in the Louvre, and all with full-length figures. One of them, the 'Virgin enthroned on Clouds,' the nude Child in her lap and three flying angels at each side, is a composition of exquisite delicacy and sentiment in tondo form, the figures of rare beauty and characteristic of Luca to the smallest detail. From its relation to the angels of the Cantoria and the Madonna of 1428 it belongs obviously to the early period —some time in the thirties; but that the various copies of it, all in unpainted terra-cotta (in the Louvre, in Oxford, in Herr A. von Beckerath's Collection), date from Luca's time, I very much doubt. They appear to me comparatively modern, but are of importance as copies of an as yet unknown original. A similar composition, but square, of which I know only the one old plaster cast in the Louvre, shows the Virgin on a folding-chair with the nude Child in her lap, both figures very similar to the tondo just described; and on each side two saints, those in the foreground easily recognisable as the Baptist and St. Peter, the latter in form and drapery a typical Luca figure closely corresponding to the same saint in the unfinished marble relief in the Bargello. This reproduction, the contours of which are much blurred, has various weaknesses (for instance, the foreshortening of the unnaturally small feet), pointing, as does the whole composition, to an original of early date.

Later and more advanced is the larger, bronzed plaster relief of the 'Madonna del sacco' in the Berlin Museum, most likely the reproduction of a bronze relief. I acquired it in Venice, from which M. Reymond judges it to be the work of a late Paduan of the Donatello School. I regret to have to upset his hypothesis; the relief was in Venice at a dealer's, but it came originally from Florence. That it has no connection with Upper Italy, least of all with the Paduan School, and that it was not produced at the end but about the middle of the century (as the modelling of the frame also demonstrates), I need not dwell upon further. On the other hand, I cannot agree with those who declare it to be a sketch-model for Luca's Madonna relief on the bronze door of the Duomo; surely the two friar-saints would have been out of place there. But at least this opinion goes to prove how greatly the relief resembles one of Luca's best-known Madonna compositions. The Virgin's gesture in taking the Child by the chin to win a smile from him, while with

both hands he tries to loosen the mother's fingers, is almost exactly that of the 'Madonna Alessandri' of the Berlin Museum; yet neither of these reliefs can, according to M. Reymond, be by Luca, because they both violate a law he has himself set up! Luca's authorship might better be disputed on account of certain deviations from the usual composition, such as the introduction of a baldachin-like drapery held by angels over the Virgin's head, the halos, the crowded massing of the folds here and there, and other small details. But these may be attributed partly to the artist himself, as would be only natural in one so productive and imaginative, partly to the careless or unskilled hand of the moulder.

The Victoria and Albert Museum and A. von Beckerath possess each a copy differing slightly of a very early work in unglazed clay: the small full-length 'Madonna in the Niche.' Each is still in the original tabernacle of the form used invariably for small clay or plaster reliefs by Donatello, Michelozzo, and particularly Luca during the first quarter of the century. The Beckerath tabernacle, especially, bears the imprint of the earliest Renaissance, as does the pose of the Child with its Donatellesque forms, and points therefore to an origin of early date. The figure of the Virgin, the shape of the head, the treatment of hair, costume and folds, the composition and sentiment are completely characteristic of Luca. It would hardly be too early to put the date of production at 1430.

A very unusual, and at the same time important, work of Luca's is to be found in the life-size half-length figure of the Madonna in the Berlin Museum (Plate XLIX.) on a plinth with flattened corners, which nearly always forms the base of the half-length figures when without a background. It is modelled in high relief, and the tinting—on the whole in excellent preservation—is most delicate, which makes it certain that the relief was not intended for glazing. Luca's gift for colour is very apparent here; the tints are rich, the flesh especially true to life, and the gold, though lavish, is admirably applied. Both figures, by their beauty (despite a most curiously rickety tendency in both mother and Child) and the treatment of the drapery, point to a time when Luca had already completely mastered the art of enamelling; the relief cannot have been produced earlier than in the forties. The omission of the glaze was probably connected with the place which the relief was to occupy.

In any case, it gives us the best idea of Luca's methods of modelling and tinting before he began to employ the glaze.

To conclude the matter of the Madonna compositions, which through Luca's work had become the favourite devotional subject of the Florentines in house, chapel, or street shrines, I will mention a number of mostly smaller Madonna reliefs which occur in somewhat blurred plaster reproductions, and of which the Berlin Museum possesses an unusually complete collection. The indistinct outlines makes their certain reference to Luca very difficult. Moreover, in the robust realism of the Child and the mournful gaze of many of the Madonnas there is a stronger streak of Donatello than we are accustomed to in Luca's authenticated renderings of the subject. Yet in the style of costume, the full contour of the face, the noble deportment of the Virgin, and in the tender attitude of mother to Child, Luca is in evidence, no doubt before he had reached complete freedom of style, yet at a time when we could attribute these works to no other artist. Even the obvious influence of Donatello is, as we see in the Cantoria and the reliefs on the Campanile, another distinctive sign of Luca della Robbia at the already advanced stage of his development at which he makes his first recorded appearance : in his thirty-second year. In this period of the Donatello influence I would place a 'Pietà' in the Berlin Museum, a small plaster relief of diversified composition, in which six robed and beautiful angels support and mourn the dead Christ. Discounting the insipid rendering of the plaster copies, its damaged condition, and the rough unskilled painting, there will be found in the figure of the Christ as in the types of the angels, their robes and folds of drapery and the noble symmetry of the group, many close analogies to the Cantoria and to several of Luca's representations of the 'Ecce Homo.'

The drawing and treatment of the landscape in this relief is akin to that of the lunettes in the Duomo ; but still more so to that in a couple of glazed terra-cotta reliefs depicting a different but equally diversified motive, never, so far as we know, repeated by Luca in later years. These are an 'Adoration of the Shepherds' in tondo form (framed in a garland of flowers, too large and of later date) in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and another in its original wooden shrine in the National Museum in Munich. M. Reymond considers my opinion on this work (or strictly speaking

on the London copy only, as he knows nothing of the other) one of 'les plus hardies de la critique.' I have uttered still bolder opinions, and have in the end had the satisfaction of seeing them unreservedly incorporated into the history of art without any mention of my name as the originator. This will also be the case with regard to these reliefs being early works of Luca della Robbia, an opinion in which Allan Marquand unconditionally agrees. The only wonder is, in looking through M. Reymond's illustrated books, how any one who has had so many photographs of specimens of Renaissance art in his hands fails to distinguish between works lying a whole century apart. For M. Reymond describes the London relief as a very characteristic work of Giovanni della Robbia. Hereby he reduces the relief and its Munich contemporary to the level of clumsy, soulless imitations by a technically unskilled descendant of the great family, whereas they embody the chaste imaginings of a young genius with one foot still in the Trecento.

M. Reymond's criticism is again very severe: 'Jamais dans toute sa vie Luca a fait de composition aussi compliquée.' Are the 'Resurrection' and the 'Ascension' of the Duomo, of the reliefs of the Cantoria, simpler perhaps? In these two reliefs Luca has depicted different moments in the 'Adoration of the Shepherds.' The Munich relief shows the Virgin and Joseph with one shepherd in adoration of the Child, in the background the herald angel appears to two shepherds beside their flock. In the London work (Plate L.), Joseph and the Virgin, with the swaddled Babe in her lap, are in the stable; before them two shepherds in adoration with their dog and sheep beside them; in the background the angel and two shepherds. In both reliefs only *one* angel appears to the shepherds, holding a scroll in the left hand; the one inscribed 'Gloria in excelsis' in the exact same character we always find in Luca's composition, the other in Roman capitals: ANVMZIO (*sic*) VOBIS · GAVDIVM. The rocky background with a few trees is in the style usual in renderings of the motive in the Trecento and beginning of the Quattrocento, as are the costumes, the attitudes, and devotional sentiment of the figures; but they have nothing in common with the later part of the century, not to speak of the gaudy, overladen compositions of the same subject by Andrea or by Giovanni della Robbia.[1]

[1] M. Reymond's objection that the Virgin is on a larger scale than the shepherds in the foreground is rather another reason for ascribing the London relief to Luca, since he almost

The rendering of the sheep and the dogs in both reliefs clearly reflects the artless naturalism of the period. The animals of Andrea and of Giovanni are but bungled pieces of work beside them; both, indeed, on occasion copy this very dog of Luca's. Types, drapery, the treatment of the hair, the beautiful and dignified attitudes, the devotional sentiment diffused through the scene are entirely characteristic of Luca. A certain diffidence and occasional lack of skill in the technical forms help to prove that in these two reliefs we have early, probably the first, glazed terra-cotta works of the master before us.

There is one branch of Luca's art which has only recently been recognised or appreciated, namely his portraits. That the creator of these Madonnas and Angels of such typical and almost Hellenic beauty should have tried his hand at portraiture was not, on the face of it, very probable, especially as his favourite medium—glazed terra-cotta—did not seem particularly suitable to the purpose. A few years ago my attention was directed to a couple of glazed portraits placed high up and in a dark position in the Bargello, and almost immediately afterwards two coloured portrait busts in high relief of the same youth were for sale, one from the Palazzo Torregiani, the other from the Palazzo Antinori. The latter, with its superb original frame of fruit, belongs to Prince Liechtenstein, the other to the Berlin Museum (Plate LI.). A comparison of these two life-sized portrait busts with one another and with the portraits in the Bargello (the bust of a young girl in semi-relief, and the bust in the round of a boy, both in good strong colours), and again with the busts in the Loggia di S. Paolo and in Viterbo, convinced me that several of them are remarkable works by Luca's own hand.

invariably represents the Madonna and Child larger than the attendant saints or angels. Again, the immense gravity with which he points out here a gross violation of 'a traditional formula of early Christian art' seems very strange. 'In the "Adoration of the Shepherds" the infant Jesus is always lying in the manger, but here the manger is empty and the Virgin holds the Infant in her arms.' But I would like to ask M. Reymond if he knows Giotto's 'Adoration' in the Arena at Padua, in which the Virgin is in the act of lifting the Infant out of the Manger; or the same subject by Giotto or a pupil in Assisi, where the Manger is empty and Mary holds the Infant exactly as in Luca's relief? Does he know nothing of the pictures by Taddeo Gaddi, Giottino, Bernardo di Firenze, Giusto, Avanzo, and other artists of the Trecento, wherein the Child lies in his mother's lap? Has he never heard of the sacred songs of Fra Jacopone da Todi, the companion of St. Francis, of which Luca della Robbia possessed one of the manuscripts which have come down to us? There he would learn that even in St. Francis's day Tradition had discarded her hard and fast shell and pulsed with the warm life-blood of human sentiment.

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

PORTRAIT-BUST OF A BOY

Museum, Berlin

The two alto-rilievo busts show only small differences, chiefly in details of costume, and the Berlin relief has a larger background. Finished off by its frame, the soft contours of the beautiful face framed in thick clustering curls, the Liechtenstein portrait will doubtless attract more attention at the first glance; but a closer examination of the Berlin portrait reveals, despite that the glaze has suffered somewhat from the atmosphere, clearer-cut outlines, an astonishing delicacy in the modelling of the sensitive lips, and the eyes with their beautiful curved lids and eyebrows, and great distinction in the arrangement and treatment of the hair. The firm modelling reminds one of a bronze, and proclaims the earlier artist, the earlier date of origin. The other specimen betrays in its soft outlines and the treatment of the garland of fruit and flowers the hand of Andrea della Robbia; the Berlin relief bears Luca's sign-manual in every detail of style and modelling. This too is proved by the portrait-like heads of Luca's two candelabra-bearing angels in the Duomo, and again by the two portraits in the Bargello. The female head, something under life-size, has the same colour scheme both in the treatment of the eyes and eyebrows and in the background. The costume and the arrangement of the hair, drawn tightly back from the forehead and hanging loosely at the sides, a double string of pearls round it and a large jewel hung in the middle of the forehead, only occurs about the middle of the fifteenth century, say between 1440 and 1460, as we see in the busts by Desiderio and the female portraits attributed to Piero della Francesca. The bust of the six-year-old boy shows Luca in every feature, and is, moreover, a masterpiece of his best period. The portrait-like nude angels beside the arms of the Guild of Silk Weavers in Orsanmichele show very similar heads, and are also allied in the arrangement of the hair bound round with a narrow fillet. Closely akin to the delicious boy-busts of Desiderio and Rossellino, this is fully equal to them in masterly truth to nature and delicacy of finish, only, like the two relief busts above described, it has something more restrained and typical, which marks the artist who was more deeply imbued with classic traditions.

We have left one work of Luca's unmentioned, which shows him in a new light: the 'Visitation' in S. Giovanni fuorcivitas at Pistoia (Plate LII.), a group excelled by none in the Quattrocento, and one of the most beautiful plastic achievements of

the whole Renaissance. Unfortunately nothing is known of the history of this nearly life-sized group.[1] In Pistoia, strange to say, it was ascribed to the painter Fra Paolino da Pistoia, a feeble imitator of Fra Bartolommeo and of Raphael. Venturi still assigns it to Andrea della Robbia, but Allan Marquand was the first to give the honour where it was due, and name Luca as its author. The group, though most unfavourably placed, broken in several places and clumsily put together again, is so composed and monumental in effect, of such originality, so noble and touching in sentiment, of such beauty of form and flow of drapery, and withal so true to nature in every line and detail, that only Verrocchio's St. Thomas group may fitly be placed beside it. What must have been its effect when it stood in the coloured niche which Luca undoubtedly designed and probably executed for it himself! The admirable glaze already points to an early period of the Robbia productions, as do the diversity and beauty of the drapery folds, the grand broad lines of the composition, the keen observation of nature—for instance, the form of the Virgin's hands and fingers corresponds entirely with her figure and the shape of her head. The Elizabeth, too, is an ideal representation of an old woman, of the utmost nobility in form, attitude, and expression. The Virgin is almost a facsimile of the 'Madonna of the Lilies' in Prince Liechtenstein's collection (cf. Plate XLVII.), and similar, though here the head-covering is differently disposed, to the bas-relief in the Victoria and Albert Museum. All these are signs that point only to Luca, quite apart from the fact that his nephew Andrea, as simple imitator of his great teacher and without any imaginative gift of his own, was utterly incapable of producing a work of such imposing and ideal quality.

The place assigned, ever since Alberti's time, to Luca della Robbia beside Ghiberti and Donatello at the head of the sculptors of the Renaissance is his by every right. Without him the art of the Renaissance would lack one of its most characteristic and attractive sides. Luca, of course, has none of Donatello's tremendous dramatic power and fluency, nor his pictorial sense; Ghiberti is beyond him in pathos and in varied flow of composition; but the

[1] In 1907 documents were published for the first time concerning the niche in which the group stood. According to these it was already in existence in 1443. From the fact that a new tabernacle was made in the beginning of the sixteenth century, it has been concluded that at that time a new group also was executed—an entirely unwarranted conclusion!

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

THE VISITATION

S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas, Pistoia

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

MADONNA AND CHILD

Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris

highest laws of plastic art, as embodied in the creations of the antique world and set up as a standard for all time, were by him informed with new life. And to his antique feeling for proportion and beauty, Luca della Robbia adds the lyric sentiment of Christian Romanticism, for which reason his art is as modern as it is sane and classical.

V

DESIDERIO'S MARBLE MADONNA RELIEF IN THE DREYFUS COLLECTION IN PARIS AND HIS RELATION TO DONATELLO AND MICHELANGELO

OUR knowledge of the varied activity and the development of the majority of Florentine sculptors of the fifteenth century has been materially enlarged and determined by the numerous Madonna representations of that period in plaster and clay which have been brought to light during the last five-and-twenty years. Despite their simplicity and the small variety of subject, they exhibit certain peculiar traits which throw an interesting light on the methods and development of this period, enabling us to rectify and supplement many of our opinions on this branch of art. Thus various marks usually considered distinctive of the sixteenth century, either singly or more or less combined, may be found in many Madonna reliefs of the Quattrocento.

Curious, unexpected features, pointing seemingly to a very advanced period, mark the works of Verrocchio and kindred artists, so that they might easily be counted as productions of the 'baroque' period; and the same holds good for several Madonnas of Donatello and his pupils and followers. Hence these works were transferred for a time to the sixteenth century, the peculiar pictorial low relief in which they are carried out being considered characteristic only of certain early followers of Michelangelo. No less a critic than K. E. von Liphart, who himself possessed an interesting marble relief of this kind (a 'St. Jerome' by Desiderio, as I opine, now in the collection of Liphart's grandson in Rathshof near Dorpat), has assigned this species of reliefs to Pierino da Vinci, and defended his opinion with all his wonted fire and energy. This opinion was shared by Cavalcaselle, who in his researches on early Italian painting occasionally draws upon plastic art for purposes of comparison.

The battle has been fought in these latter days round a small

full-length marble relief of the Madonna, now in the possession of M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris (Plate LIII.). Soon after 1871, when it came into the hands of its present owner from the Timbal Collection, I had defined this interesting work as a youthful production of Desiderio da Settignano. Subsequently I pointed out the affinity of Michelangelo's early 'Madonna of the Steps' in the Buonarroti Museum (cf. Plate XXIV.), which I therefore pronounced to be influenced by Desiderio's relief. Against this opinion Professor Heinrich Wölfflin, in a paper in the *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* (1893, p. 107 *et seq.*), raised a protest. Formerly describing it as the worthless production of some mediocre Cinquecentist after a Donatello model, he now pronounced it to be a modern forgery, and the original, of which Wölfflin seems to have discovered a cast, to be the work of an early Cinquecento artist influenced by Michelangelo's 'Madonna of the Steps.' This controversy might well be left to take care of itself, were it only a question of this one small work which is in a private collection, if it did not raise important general issues. I trust, therefore, that in the issue of the present discussion Wölfflin's own words may, not without reason, be applied to me: 'There is no question here of tiresome insistence on one's own opinion; with the greatest pleasure would I let the matter rest as it is, did I not thereby lose a good opportunity to lay new material and fresh problems before art connoisseurs.'

Wölfflin's assertion as to the Dreyfus relief being a forgery would certainly be attributed by any one who has seen the beautiful original to imperfect acquaintance, if Wölfflin had not expressly stated that he had seen it. But from what I know of the plastic works of the Renaissance and their reproductions, no forger is capable of applying the gold—partly still in place, partly left in patches in the marble—in just the manner we see here. The gold, too, is only employed at certain points where we find it in other marble productions of the Quattrocento—on the halos, the hair, the borders of the garments and the ornaments. Besides, the whole technique, the style of the low relief, the under-cutting, has nothing of the methods of the modern forger, but is altogether characteristic of the marble cutting of the Early Renaissance. To be sure, it does not follow that the relief in question is the original one, seeing that many copies and replicas date from the period of the Renaissance. Wölfflin, therefore, had every right to look about for another

original if the Dreyfus relief did not satisfy him in that capacity. The cast, which he found in a small modelling *bottega* in Rome, is met with still in the modelling shops of Rome, Florence, and Milan; it is just one of a few, mostly small, cheap pieces moulded first when about fifty years ago the interest in the art of the Renaissance was slowly reviving, and since then moulded over and over again, growing ever duller and more blurred in the process. Nevertheless this cast differs in certain points so materially from the Dreyfus marble that Wölfflin was justified in assuming that the one was not moulded on the other. His further deduction that this cast had been moulded on the real original and then used as the model by the modern forger of the Dreyfus relief is, however, —quite apart from the question of the genuineness of this relief— not so justifiable. For the cast might very well have been moulded in a plaster copy of the Dreyfus marble, such copies frequently showing differences in size and detail. From an Italian source I was able recently to procure a similar plaster relief of this very composition. This agrees exactly with the cast except for the blurred outlines of the latter, the result of repeated mouldings. Like the cast it is somewhat smaller than the marble, the forms are rounder and less sharp, the folds less angular, the proportions better, and the Virgin's attitude more bent. But otherwise the plaster is exactly the same as the marble, in those details, too, which in the Dreyfus relief Wölfflin has put down to the forger: the insertions on the sleeves, the Gothic ornaments, and the buttoned slit on the sleeves, the treatment of the folds of the mantle over the stone seat, the globe-like support under the left foot, etc. By degrees these characteristic details have faded from the cast, or the moulder, finding them unintelligible, has gradually removed or altered them.

It is quite easy in a collection so rich in plaster reliefs as the Berlin Museum to show that these copies frequently differ considerably from one another and from their originals in marble, bronze, or clay. This occurs particularly often with the works of Donatello and his immediate successors. Thus the copy owned by Dr. Weisbach in Berlin of the plaster relief of Donatello's 'Madonna with Saints and Angels' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (cf. Plate XXVIII.) has two angels in place of the saints. I have already discussed the differences in the 'Madonna with the Rose,' and the same applies to the 'Madonna and Child in the Chair.' Indeed, there is a Madonna relief

by Rossellino—the original no longer exists—of which there are numerous plaster copies in three different sizes all differing in detail from one another. In the repetitions of his clay reliefs ordered from Luca della Robbia he invariably introduced many alterations; so with these plaster copies, whether carried out from the original in the master's *bottega* or later, the artist would frequently make some changes in the mould or himself introduce them on the finished cast.

In attributing this relief to Desiderio (cf. my *Italian Sculpture of the Renaissance*, p. 65 *et seq.*) I drew attention to the fact that in the important private collection of drawings belonging to J. P. Heseltine in London there was a drawing of it under Michelangelo's name, which seemed, judging from a photograph, to give additional support to my argument that Michelangelo's 'Madonna of the Steps' was influenced by Desiderio's relief. To Wölfflin is due the credit of discovering in the Uffizi another drawing of the 'Holy Family' by Bandinelli which must likewise be referred to this composition. Meanwhile, I have come upon a couple of marble reliefs, both having close affinity with Desiderio's Madonna, which cannot fail to settle beyond all doubt that this composition belongs to the Quattrocento, and cannot possibly be dependent on Michelangelo's 'Madonna of the Steps.'

One of these Madonnas is in private hands in France. It is a marble alto-rilievo, the figures three-quarter life size. But for certain details, such as a slightly different pose of the Virgin's head, the group corresponds to that of the Dreyfus relief. The modelling betrays a rough prentice hand such as Donatello often employed, who then worked up more or less free copies of the master's simpler compositions (cf. pp. 68-71). Uncouth, without sense of proportion or emotional quality, as is this relief (executed apparently without any reference to the master), it is of some interest in the disposition of the folds, manifestly borrowed from the antique draped figure. Another and very faithful imitation of the antique is the *putto* who serves the Madonna as support instead of the stone seat. He is taken from one of the *putti* of the so-called 'Throne of Zeus,' of which there are one or two copies still to be found in marble reliefs in the Uffizi. This likewise brings us back to Donatello, who transferred the delightful children of these reliefs almost bodily to several of his smaller compositions. Again, Donatello appears in another though trivial detail—the plaited band round the arm of the winged

boy, often to be seen on his Madonnas, but rarely employed by any other artist, and then only by a follower of Donatello. There is an old plaster replica of this relief in the collection (particularly rich in these interesting plaster reliefs) of Stefano Bardini in Florence.[1]

One peculiarity of this relief is of interest in throwing some light upon a somewhat obscure detail of the Dreyfus relief: the 'globe' on which the Virgin rests her left foot—for here her foot rests on little clumps of cloud. She is therefore—though this is not at once evident in the clumsy handling of the work—represented as if upborne on clouds. For this reason the artist has substituted a *putto* for the heavy seat.

There is a third of similar design, a small marble relief, in the possession of Mr. Quincy A. Shaw of Boston. The Virgin is again seated on clouds and attended by cherubs and angels. The fat-cheeked, bucolic-looking children and the somewhat slovenly attitude of the Virgin hinder one at the first glance from recognising the full import of this fine composition. On closer observation Donatello is evident in every line. We may safely regard it as a piece of his own handiwork, originating probably at the end of the twenties or beginning of the thirties, as I have endeavoured to establish elsewhere (cf. pp. 68 *et seq.*).

We may dispute as we like whether Desiderio's relief was taken directly from this composition of Donatello's, and then, in its turn, copied by an unskilled workman; or if there existed another similar Madonna relief by the master which served as exact model to both. Be that as it may, the 'Madonna in the Clouds' proves sufficiently that both reliefs are entirely dependent on Donatello, and that in their turn they influenced Michelangelo in his 'Madonna of the Steps.' Many of the details which are considered characteristic of the Late Renaissance, or even the 'baroque,' are to be found not only in these peculiar bas-reliefs, but in many works of the Early Renaissance, especially those by Donatello and his followers, as a glance through the photographs of Donatello's Madonna representations will show (cf. chap. ii.). A grand simplicity, typical forms, diversity of action, the enlivening addition of ribbons, ornaments,

[1] The plaster copy and the marble original both have the foreshortened halos seen in the Dreyfus relief. Among the Madonna reliefs and plaques of the Quattrocento these foreshortened halos will frequently be found, even as early as the middle of the century, for instance, in the well-known Christ-Medallion of Matteo dei Pasti. It is no reason whatever for assuming a late origin, not to speak of a forgery.

etc., are by no means first thought of by the Late Renaissance, but appear, though less definite and self-assured, in many works even of the first half of the Quattrocento, more especially in those of Donatello. These are but aids to the animation of the composition employed after one fashion or another by every artist with any claim to genius. Therefore we need not wait for Michelangelo's works, but may discover them in those of Donatello, Quercia, Ghiberti, even of Giovanni Pisano.

But the crowded composition, the utmost use of the space at his command, is most marked with Donatello; both the Shaw 'Madonna in the Clouds' and the Desiderio Madonna in the Dreyfus Collection have this distinguishing trait. The deliberate use of contrast is also very apparent in Donatello's Madonna reliefs. The Virgin is almost always represented in profile, the Child full face; Mary in rich draperies and a flowing veil, the Child nude; the mother lost in mournful reverie or bending a troubled gaze upon the unconscious Infant; the Madonna of stately build and beautiful antique profile, the Infant usually a poor feeble little creature such as the artist might see in the arms of any mother in the streets of Florence. The attitude of the Virgin in the Shaw relief, with the widespread knees whereby the Child obtains its particularly effective pose, has been regarded as a motive of the sixteenth century, also the raising of the left foot—in this case on a cherub's head. But these details are found not only here but in a number of the most familiar figures by Donatello and his followers. I need only mention the 'Evangelists' on the vault of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, the bronze 'David' in the Bargello and the marble 'David' in the Casa Martelli, the small 'Madonna with Saints' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (cf. Plate XXVIII.), and the one belonging to Dr. Weisbach in Berlin. Among the works of his followers, there are Agostino di Duccio's 'Prophets' and 'Sibyls' in S. Francesco at Rimini, various early very Donatello-like reliefs by Luca della Robbia, one or two full-length Madonnas in the Imperial Museum at Vienna, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, etc. The most conspicuous example of the kind is perhaps the Madonna statuette in the Berlin Museum, the work of some very original follower of Donatello, in which the Virgin rests her foot on a small box (a *scaldino*?) similarly to one of Donatello's 'Prophets' on the bronze doors of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo.

The costume of the Madonna in the Shaw relief is worthy of remark; the large head-kerchief and the wide mantle enveloping, yet not hiding, the form, very similar to the sheetlike drapery of Michelangelo's 'Madonna of the Steps.' Here, as in the small Madonna relief in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Donatello departs, for æsthetic reasons, entirely from the costume of the period. But even where he retains it, he adapts it to his fancy, and according to the exigencies of the design introduces wide embroideries, borders, shoulder-straps, fillets, fluttering hair-ribbons, and the like, for all of which he served as direct model to Michelangelo. As classical examples I will point out the 'Judith,' the 'Annunciation' in S. Croce (cf. Plates VIII. and IV.), the bronze Madonna relief in the Louvre, and the bronze 'Crucifixion' relief in the Bargello.

In these and other works observe how the sculptor loves to emphasise the delicately turned wrists (herein again a forerunner of Michelangelo), how he spreads the beautiful slender fingers, loosely holding the robe or clasping the Infant close. And this is no self-conscious method with him to make his figures interesting, but simply a means of accentuating the individuality of the conception. The deeper we go in the study of this great master's work, the more copies of his less important productions and those of his assistants and followers we examine for comparison, the more distinctly do we recognise that his genius was as inexhaustible in the adaptation of every artistic medium to his particular ends as was his versatile power of embodying the endless pictures of his teeming imagination.

VI

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO AND FRANCESCO LAURANA AS PORTRAIT-SCULPTORS AND THE TRUE BUST OF MARIETTA STROZZI[1]

IN judging of various works of art, and in endeavouring to refer them to particular artists, we must avail ourselves, especially where documentary evidence is lacking, of certain distinguishing marks which a careful comparison of the works will not fail to disclose. To the inexperienced student of works of art it may seem strange to assert that this or that master belonging to a certain period can have painted or sculptured only in such and such a manner; indeed, it is just from the artists themselves that we frequently hear the assertion that there is no reason why one should not paint to-day in a totally different manner from yesterday or again from to-morrow. This contradictory view is owing to the fact that only very few of those who look at works of art are capable of accounting clearly for the pleasure they derive therefrom. After closer and more frequent inspection numerous peculiarities, distinguishing one artist from another and forming together his individual style, will present themselves to the eye of the student and enable him to determine the authorship of a work of art as surely as we recognise a friend by his speech or his handwriting. In the representation of the human figure, for instance, an artist will have his own individual 'manner' or 'style' of treating the costume, the folds of drapery, the hair, and certain features, particularly the extremities, his characteristic scheme of colour; or, if a sculptor, his technical handling of the marble, bronze, or clay, etc., a study of which will very soon enable one to distinguish that master's work from any other.

[1] Since this essay was written important studies of Laurana have been published, namely two books by W. Rolfs and L. Burger (1907). They have again reviewed the *œuvre* of Laurana, but as they have confirmed in essentials the substance of this chapter, I have left my work in its original form.

But what if we have to decide upon a portrait, or, worse still, on a bust where even the criterion of colour is absent, every feature is individual, and the dress usually showing but an inch or two below the shoulders? In truth the difficulties attendant on the criticism of busts are particularly great. Among the large numbers of, in many instances, admirable portrait busts of Greek and even of Roman origin of which there are no documentary records, very few indeed have as yet been assigned with certainty to their authors. It is the same with the portrait busts of the Middle Ages; and as regards those of the Renaissance, our information is based on the rare examples on which the sculptor has inscribed his name, or where it has been handed down to us by early authorities.

At the head of the small number of portrait busts whose authenticity is considered assured by documentary evidence stood that bust in the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence, described by Vasari as the portrait of Marietta Strozzi by Desiderio da Settignano, a masterpiece which he extols in the following words: 'Egli, similmente di marmo, ritrasse di naturale la testa della Marietta degli Strozzi; la quale essendo bellissima, gli riusci molto eccellente.' And the praise thus bestowed upon the bust not so very long after its production, it has received again in full measure since the appreciation of the plastic art of the Renaissance has begun to revive. Charles Perkins remarks in its praise: 'It would be difficult to find another bust exhibiting to the same degree all the distinctive merits of the best work of the Quattrocento, namely, masterly handling of the material, taste in conception, consummate execution, and strictly correct drawing.' Nor can the bust complain of any loss of fame since, in 1878, it passed from the splendid palace which it had adorned for more than four hundred years into the less romantic atmosphere of the Berlin Museum. Whether it really represents Marietta Strozzi is a question I raised soon after its arrival in our collection, for one reason, because at Desiderio's death, January 16, 1464, Marietta could not have been more than fifteen, whereas this bust has the features of a young woman of twenty at least. Again, other and more significant doubts have assailed me since then as to the authenticity of the accepted name for the sculptor of this bust, doubts which would certainly upset my contention against Vasari's naming of the bust if he had no

urther authority for his statement. The peculiar, demure, reserved xpression of the young face and the severe simplicity and absence f decorative detail are in complete contrast to the vivid, almost ervous animation shown in Desiderio's figures and his fresh uncon-entional manner of handling the marble. Could the sculptor hange his style so utterly out of regard for the individuality of is 'sitter'? The decisive answer to this question could be best btained from other portrait busts by his hand. Unfortunately e have no busts actually authenticated as Desiderio's, but the harply marked peculiarities of his artistic methods enable us to ssign to him with every probability a number of busts of which ne two most important happen to be in the Berlin Museum.

One of these belongs to the early additions to the Italian Section f the Museum—the bust of a young girl (Plate LIV.) obtained n Florence in 1842 by Waagen—probably through the agency f the painter Mussini—for 20 francesconi. It was catalogued, is true, under the name of Donatello, but anything like a critical tudy of the works of the Quattrocento can hardly be said to have xisted in those days. However, let any one who remembers the elightful figures on the pediment of the Marsuppini tomb in Santa roce and at the sides of the shrine in the S. Lorenzo look at his bust, and he will at once take it for a sister of those charming ouths, so clearly does it resemble them in conception and form. he slender limbs, sloping shoulders, the fearless carriage of the ead, the type of feature, the lively temperament betrayed by the arcely restrained smile of the mobile lips, and the arch glance—l these traits of the youthful figures on Desiderio's authenticated orks are to be found in the bust in the Berlin Museum. Extend-g the comparison to the details, we find the same correspondence n the beautiful curves of the mouth, the sensitive nostrils, the full elids, the shape of the forehead, and the set of the head. Even n the costume, though that of the bust differs of course from the ealised vesture of the youths, there is similarity in the under-tting of the folds of the sleeves, the treatment of the hair with esiderio's favourite fillet across it.

The fact that this bust agrees so completely with figures (cf. pp. 39, 140) we know unquestionably to be Desiderio's supplies us with standard by which to judge a number of other busts, and assign em with equal or nearly equal certainty to the same sculptor.

The very closest relationship is evident in the unpainted plaster bust of a young gentlewoman obtained for the Berlin Museum in 1889. In conception, expression and pose, in the arrangement of the hair, even of the veil, the folds of the sleeve, the flesh modelling, the two busts resemble one another as closely as is possible, considering the difference of material. Both are unquestionably the work of one sculptor, and that one Desiderio da Settignano. As regards the plaster bust, one may be uncertain at the first glance whether it is a cast or has been modelled in plaster; the fact is, it is both, and this leads us to the interesting conclusion that here we have the artist's auxiliary model, first moulded on the clay sketch-model, and then—unlike the present custom—the details most carefully worked over by Desiderio himself. In parts, for instance on the cheeks, the chin, and the neck, the surface is worked up in the most thorough and delicate manner with the chisel or similar tools, while the edges of the full eyelids, the clean-cut lips, the brow, and the nostrils are sharpened by additional plaster and then worked up like the rest. The artist has not expended the same care on the details, except in deepening here and there the creases of the sleeves and the veil, and the loose strands of hair on the temples. No trace of colouring remains, not even of the coat of chalk size with which plaster was always washed over before painting, from which we may conclude that the bust was not tinted. This circumstance tends to confirm our supposition that it was the artist's auxiliary model, like the model for the Berlin bust of a young Princess of Urbino in the possession of the Earl of Wemyss, to which I shall presently refer. In the latter, however, the subsequent working up is not so apparent as in our bust.

The resemblance between the two Berlin busts is so great that at the first glance one would take them for portraits of the same sitter. This cannot be determined with certainty; the mouth of the plaster bust is larger, the lips thinner, the chin decidedly wider and rather more prominent. Is this the result of the few years of added age, or were the two sitters related? The long neck, the small head, narrow sloping shoulders, prominent eyes with their full eyelids and high-arched brows, the long delicate nose, the somewhat projecting upper lip which gives the face that charming arch look—these and other corresponding points mark the strong family likeness between the two heads. But to what family the ladies belonged

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST OF MARIETTA STROZZI

Museum, Berlin

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST OF A PRINCESS OF URBINO

Museum, Berlin

We have no means of ever conjecturing (cf. pp. 139, 140), beyond that in all probability they were Florentines. For, apart from the fact that they are the work of a Florentine sculptor, both busts were the property of old Florentine houses, and answer in a marked degree to the type of high-born women of that day, as a glance at Ghirlandaio's frescoes in the choir of S. Maria Novella will confirm.

The veil of the plaster bust, the ends of which fall on the shoulders, has been skilfully employed by Desiderio to counteract the unpleasing effect of the lady's unusually long throat. Whether the marble bust was executed from this plaster one I am unable to say. None has been found as yet, but it may quite possibly be lying hidden in some lumber-room or cellar of the palaces or numerous villas in the neighbourhood of Florence from which many a priceless treasure, particularly of Quattrocento art, has been brought out to the light of day during the last thirty or forty years.

Since 1887 the Berlin Museum has preserved another youthful feminine bust (Plate LV.), which, while showing strong affinity in conception and treatment, differs from the two already described in the totally dissimilar type of the sitter. Till the above date it had been in the possession of the Barberini family, to whom it came with the Urbino heirlooms. For years it stood unnoticed among the dilapidated busts of the Cæsars in the garden behind the palace in Rome. But when, in the spring of 1883, on the occasion of the Castellani sale, a few minor antiques were brought out to be sold, this bust was placed in an anteroom of the palace, where I saw it for the first time. In this case the sculptor had an essentially different type of personality to deal with; instead of the narrowly built, high-spirited, and merry-eyed Florentine girl of the marble bust, we have here a somewhat thick-set young gentlewoman of haughty bearing and with a strong will of her own. Certain divergencies in the method of procedure are due to the difference of material. For the bust is not of marble, but of a fine-grained limestone found in Urbino and very similar to soapstone and to *pietra d'Istria*, but superior to them in its warmth of tone. As it is the peculiarity of this stone to be very soft when first quarried and to harden gradually under exposure, the final finishing touches of the chisel or other tools can attain a greater sharpness than is feasible with the hard and brittle marble.

Setting aside these intrinsic differences, a comparison with the other bust will demonstrate beyond a doubt that the Urbino portrait is likewise from the hand of Desiderio. The style and outline of the bust are the same; the droop of the shoulders, the poise of the head, the curves of the mouth and set of the lips, the well-cut nostrils, the treatment of the eyelids, the arrangement of the hair,—all exhibit the same characteristics. There are other details, too, which witness to the one hand, but more particularly the arrangement of the hair. It is combed back from the face and wound round the head like a diadem in a thick braid loosely interwoven with a ribbon. A wide gauze scarf holds the hair up at the back, and passing over the ears is fastened on the top of the head, while a narrow band crosses the high forehead and keeps the whole coiffure in place.

This special coiffure appears again in the delightful profile portrait of a blonde Florentine beauty, a member of the Benci family, in the Poldi-Pezzoli Gallery at Milan,[1] which as a picture forms a worthy pendant to the bust. But no other female portrait bust of the Quattrocento comes up to it; even the wax bust in the Musée Wicar at Lille, formerly ascribed to Raphael, is not worthy to be placed beside the one in the Berlin Museum. No other work of the kind can show such absolute truth to nature, such loving care in the finish, down to the most trivial detail. And that Desiderio should have achieved this triumph of female portraiture is no accident. No artist was so fully equipped for the task as he. To the keen observation and incorruptible fidelity to nature which he had received from Donatello he added his own peculiar gifts: a charm, a sense of æsthetic fitness, and a sweet and wholesome gaiety by which he had brought about an entirely new development of Florentine art, a phase which stands out as one of the most brilliant and enthralling epochs of the art of all time.

By some happy chance the model for the Urbino bust has been preserved—or rather a plaster cast of the clay sketch-model—and is now the property of the Earl of Wemyss in London. Except that it is raised a little higher and turned to the side, the head shows scarcely any difference, even the elaborate coiffure is the same, but

[1] The picture is named as the work of Piero della Francesca, but looks to me far more like that of his master, Domenico Veneziano, as I have endeavoured to prove in the *Jahrbuch der K. Pr. Kunstsammlungen*, 1897, p. 187 *et seq.*

e dress is different. Instead of the handsome bodice which, in cordance with the fashion of the day, repressed as much as pos- ble the contours of the bosom, only a chemise covers the broad oulders, and leaves the beautiful young bosom nearly bare. This ntrammelled, almost pictorial, composition, which at the first ance might seem to imply a much later origin, must yet be ferred to Desiderio himself. For not only are the measurements the plaster bust on a larger scale than those of the Berlin one, erefore precluding the idea of the former being a cast of the tter, but the whole work, though much broken and stuck together ain, is composed of the same mixture of fine old marble plaster, that there can be no question of a later arrangement of the wer part adapted to a head of an earlier period. This is further cluded by the fact that owing to the different pose of the head e sculptor has had to make changes in the neck and in the face— rticularly the cheeks—which bear witness to the keenest obser- tion of nature.[1]

Though less well defined in execution owing to the dull, un- sponsive medium, by its freer movement and stronger development the neck and bust, this model has the advantage over the more ished stone; that, nevertheless, the artist did not take it as e model for the final work finds its explanation in the manners the day, which precluded the idea of such freedom in the por- ayal of a noble lady. Hence it is probable that the lady granted e sculptor only a few sittings just for the head, and that for the ck and bust Desiderio employed some handsome female model.

It is not unnatural to wish to know the name of the original such a masterpiece as this. Unfortunately, we have no certain ne. The fact that the bust came from the palace in Urbino, and, dging from the material, was also executed there, makes it well- gh certain that it is the portrait of some member of the princely use of Urbino; for of high degree she undoubtedly is—the dress one confirms that. Her youth precludes the idea of her being derigo's first wife; and to the second, whose features are familiar us in busts and pictures, she bears no resemblance. But she

[1] A very similar arrangement is shown in the female profile bust in marble, wrongly ibed to Donatello, in the Museum of the Castello at Milan (a copy, bequeathed by Henry ughan, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum), of Florentine origin and closely akin Desiderio's.

might very well be Federigo's daughter, for though he had no children by his first marriage, he had several natural daughters whom he brought up as legitimate and married into noble families.

But there are several others besides these almost unique busts which may confidently be ascribed to Desiderio. First of all, the Bargello possesses a marble female bust which in composition, costume, and arrangement of the hair bears such close affinity to the two Berlin busts and the figures of the youths on Desiderio's monuments in S. Croce and S. Lorenzo, that it can only be referred to the atelier in which those works originated. In the modelling of the head, in particular (the eyes, curiously enough, have pupils cut in them), it is inferior, and was therefore probably carried out by an assistant. Another group of female busts that issued, in all likelihood, from Desiderio's *bottega*, are put together somewhat clumsily of plaster and canvas over a wooden block, but are instinct, nevertheless, with the charm of all Desiderio's female busts. One of these is in the collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris, another passed from the S. Goldschmidt Collection to the Louvre, and Dr. Albert Figdor in Vienna owns a third. More interesting, because of its rich and almost perfectly preserved original colouring, is a similar, but alto-rilievo, plaster portrait in the Berlin Museum, said to have been originally in a lunette over a door of the palace at Urbino. Here again we have the upright pose, the long throat, and the mobile lips—so pronounced in the Berlin bust—which marks it as a product of Desiderio's workshop. Various female relief portraits in *pietra serena* present the same characteristic traits. Unusually attractive, and, from its likeness to the figures on the Marsuppini tomb, undoubtedly referable to Desiderio, and moreover a finished piece of the master's own handiwork, is the marble bust of a youth in the Bargello. The question as to which of the innumerable busts of Florentine boys assigned from time immemorial *en masse* to Donatello should really be referred to Desiderio is one which I shall deal with presently at greater length in my next chapter. A study of the not inconsiderable number of portrait busts of various kinds, which from their corresponding character and their likeness to the authenticated works of Desiderio we may confidently assume to be his, makes it more and more improbable that the marble bust in the Berlin Museum, known as the portrait of Marietta Strozzi, can be in-

cluded in that master's productions. And the definition has become still more unlikely since the discovery of a whole group of female busts and masks, wholly alien to Desiderio's style, but having the closest affinity to the so-called 'Marietta'; indeed, one of them corresponds so exactly in every feature that it can only be a portrait of the same person. The artist's peculiarities are very pronounced in all these busts. Certain features recur so constantly, certain details in the sculptor's technique are repeated in so conspicuous a manner, that their reference to one and the same artist is placed beyond a doubt; the more so that most of these traits are due, not to the individual sitter, but to the sculptor's own peculiar idiosyncrasy and ingrained mannerism. In the Berlin bust we notice at once the gentle droop of the head and its somewhat stiff pose, the slightly oblique, downcast eyes, the firmly closed, rather impassive mouth—these traits are repeated in every bust belonging to this group, and in some are pronounced to the point of the grotesque. The sculptor's methods, too, agree more entirely than those of any other artist of the period—as in the high polish of the flesh, the sketchy, half-finished execution of the dress, and (in many of the busts) also of the hair and the head-dress, which were completed by painting, still more or less visible on some of them. Another marked characteristic is the fondness for putting the busts on a socle chiselled out of the one block of marble, and all very similar to one another in shape and carving.

Most like the so-called 'Marietta Strozzi' is a marble bust in the possession of Stefano Bardini in Florence (formerly in that of Alessandro Castellani in Rome), so striking in its resemblance that it must be a portrait of the same sitter and a free rendering of the bust in Berlin. Castellani acquired it in Naples, and as it had long been exposed to damp in the place where it stood, it has lost the fine flesh polish which distinguishes the Berlin bust. The bas-relief decoration of the socle presents a different scene: on each side of the inscription-plate a centaur with a nude female figure on its back and three playing *putti*. Otherwise the two busts are almost identical.

Akin to these two in form and socle is a small bust in the Museo Nazionale in Florence bearing the inscription DIVA BAPTISTA SFORTIA·VRB·RG., identifying it as the portrait of the second wife of Duke Federigo of Urbino. The pose of the head leaning slightly backwards is disagreeably stiff, which, combined with the heavy eyes and

tightly closed lips, imparts a stony, almost dead look to the whole face.

The same hand is apparent in a female bust which for many years formed one of the chief ornaments of the Ambras Collection in Vienna and has now found a fitting place in the Hofmuseum (Plate LVI.). This bust gives the figure to the waist and is without a socle; it differs too from the busts already described by having the hair confined in a net which, like the costume, is laid on and finished with paint. The colours are in the main preserved, and have been recently very successfully cleaned of a modern coating of paint by which the work was much disfigured. Here again the shape of the head, the deportment, the slant of the heavy lidded eyes set wide apart, the contour of the chin and the cheeks are the same as in the works already described. A similar bust, probably for a very long time in France, is now in the Louvre among the sculptures of the Renaissance. The hair is almost entirely covered by a coif, formerly finished like the dress by paint now no longer visible.

If doubt may arise as to the Vienna and Paris busts representing one person, there can be no question of the exact accordance between two other newly discovered busts of this group with the portrait in the Louvre, or that all three are by the hand of the same sculptor. One was offered for sale in 1883 in Naples, where it had long been hidden away in the lumber-room of a palace, and is now in the collection of Mme. Edouard André in Paris, so eminently rich in interesting Italian works of art. A second replica was acquired in 1887 by Professor Salinas from a convent in Sicily for the Palermo Museum, which has developed so amazingly under his direction. Allowing for a few slight blemishes, the accordance between the three busts is so complete that to describe the one in the Louvre is to describe them all. In the Museum at Palermo I found the sole male portrait which can with certainty be ascribed to the sculptor of this group of marble busts. It is the head of a youth with beautiful girlish features, the same drooping eyes set a little aslant, the smooth oval face, and with the same modelling and treatment as the female busts. It had stood for twenty years in the storehouse of a church in Palermo when Salinas obtained it for the Museum.

The marked uniformity of all these busts both in conception and treatment naturally warns us to use extra caution in attempting to name them as portraits. But a comparison of the three last described

Frankenstein, Vienna

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST

Hofmuseum, Vienna

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST OF BEATRICE OF ARAGON

Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris

with the well-known marble bust (Plate LVII.) belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris bearing the inscription DIVA BEATRIX ARAGONIA would certainly justify one in declaring them to be portraits of this same daughter of Ferdinand I. of Naples. Similarly in the Vienna bust we might recognise the same lady a few years older, maybe when she was already the wife of Matthias Corvinus. There is no inherent improbability in the assumption that one artist should have executed several busts of the selfsame princess; but, as I have said before, the undeviating uniformity of this master's methods does much to increase the difficulty of deciding.

The Dreyfus bust, which represents the princess as a very young girl, differs from the others chiefly in the fashion of the bodice, which is edged round the opening with a border bearing an oriental inscription, the exact counterpart of that on the dress of the so-called 'Marietta Strozzi' in the Berlin Museum. Another work by the same hand (the nose and lips restored), but very obviously portraying a different person, came about twelve years ago into Venice from Urbino, and is now owned by Baron Schickler of Paris. It represents a middle-aged woman of large proportions. The pose is, if anything, more constrained than in any one of the busts hitherto described.

But with these busts the list of the works of this particular master is not exhausted. In 1871, among the art treasures of Baron Hector Garriod, a French collector living in Florence, I came across the face portion of a female head bearing so striking a resemblance to the so-called 'Marietta Strozzi' that Herr von Liphart, to whom I owed my introduction, had noticed it too, and following Vasari's description had set it down as a work of Desiderio. But its likeness to the Louvre bust is still greater; it has the same pose, the same contours of cheek and chin, the same firmly closed mouth, the languid slanting eyes set wide apart, the arched, scarcely perceptible eyebrows, and the low receding forehead. The execution is remarkably delicate. We could only account for the missing back of the head by surmising some accident to the bust obliging the restorer to cut it away.

The extraordinary charm of this marble mask led me in 1876 to open up negotiations through a French art-dealer for its acquisition. My commission was soon accomplished, and, a week or two later, the mask was safe in the Berlin Museum. But before I had overcome

the difficulties of making it in some degree presentable for exhibition, I learned that my much desired acquisition was a forgery; for Baron Garriod had never parted with his mask. This last piece of information was correct, as I proved when visiting Florence shortly afterwards. And yet the tinting and the treatment of the marble bore so unmistakably the character of age, and moreover of the Quattrocento, that I did not feel justified in at once declaring myself at fault. However, appearances were certainly against me, also the dealer left my questions concerning the origin of the mask unanswered. At this juncture Louis Courajod came to my assistance. He had seen the mask in Berlin, and, like myself, been convinced of its authenticity, although I had laid the whole story before him. He now informed me that he had discovered a marble mask, the counterpart of the other two, in the small Municipal Museum of Villeneuve-les-Avignon in the south of France. There could be no doubt as to its being genuine; it had come out of the old Hospice there. Since then, thanks chiefly to Courajod, four more of these marble masks have become known in various small collections in the south of France—the Town Museums of Aix-en-Provence, Bourges, and Puy-au-Velay, and the collection of M. Morel in Carpentras. Their correspondence, which is so complete that only by measurement and the different marks of injury can they be distinguished from one another, makes their common origin quite certain, and would also leave no doubt of their being portraits of one person had we not sufficiently proved that the sculptor of these busts and masks took little count of the individual traits of his sitters.

The frequent recurrence of just the face part of busts all modelled on the same lines, to which Courajod's term 'masks' is now universally applied, precluded the idea that they were the result of accident. It is clear from the peg-holes and the roughness of the inner surface that they were applied to a bust or statue probably of cheaper material and executed by an inferior artist. The languid look of the half-closed eyes, common to all these masks, has led to the suggestion that they were copies of death-masks and applied to sepulchral figures. But apart from the fact that the eyes would then be quite closed, all the busts already described have the same trait in greater or less degree. I take it therefore that these masks were portions of busts which for reasons of economy were put together of different pieces. A female bust by a Lombard sculptor of the end of the

Quattrocento, which I once saw at Michelangelo Guggenheim's in Venice, was pieced together in this manner.

In my article on 'The Italian Portrait Sculptures of the Fifteenth Century in the Berlin Museum,' which appeared on the occasion of the silver wedding of the then Crown Prince and Princess (Feb. 25, 1883), I grouped together about half the busts here described in discussing the connection between the so-called 'Marietta Strozzi' and the mask acquired for our Museum. I had pointed out the close affinity of the two, and Louis Courajod then took up the question (in the July number of the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1883—'Observations sur deux Bustes du Louvre') and assumed that in view of their great resemblances they must have issued from the same atelier. 'The nine works enumerated here,' he says, 'are connected by the closest of ties; they are the products of one inspiration and one technique; they emanated not only from one school but from one atelier, one artist whose name it still remains to discover.' At that time, indeed, we had no clue to his name. Even among the considerable number of cognate works by the same artist found since then, not one bears an inscription or can be ascribed to any known sculptor either from records or from its relation to other authenticated works. Yet I fancy that from the striking peculiarities of these numerous works, by comparing them with other important examples of plastic art, by tracing the history of the persons they represent, and, more especially, from the place where they were found, we may draw indirect evidence leading back to one particular artist.

The first thing that strikes one is that the greater number of them had a common place of origin. The bust of the young princess of Aragon in the Dreyfus Collection originated in Naples; from Naples came the Bardini bust together with a contemporary male portrait in the characteristic French costume of the period, likewise in the Bardini Collection; finally, the bust in the possession of Mme. Edouard André was also found in Naples. Both the busts in the Museum at Palermo had been from time immemorial in Sicily. The majority of the masks are still in the south of France; the one in Berlin and at Baron Hector Garriod's in Florence were originally in French hands. The bust of Battista Sforza in the Bargello, and that of an unknown woman in Baron Schickler's Collection, show evidence of having been produced in Urbino. The only bust that seems to belong to Florence is the Berlin one from the Palazzo Strozzi.

However, leaving aside the question of the artist's name—the fact that from the age of the sitter she cannot be Marietta Strozzi, furthermore that a replica had been family property for long years in Naples, together with a bust of a member of the House of Aragon, makes it, to my mind, far more probable that this bust too originated in Naples, and represents a Neapolitan princess. Seeing that until the rescinding of his banishment in 1466 Filippo Strozzi lived in Naples, and afterwards maintained intimate relations with that court, it is not surprising that he should have in his possession the bust of a member of the Neapolitan reigning family. The busts in the Vienna Museum and the Louvre alone afford no clue to their origin; but as the latter corresponds exactly with the bust in Palermo and Mme. André's which came from Naples, it is highly probable that they too are of Neapolitan or Sicilian origin.

From this survey of the various places of origin of his productions we gather then that the sculptor in question worked chiefly in Urbino, Naples, Sicily, and the south of France; where, to judge from those of his sitters whose names are known to us, he seems to have been the favourite sculptor at the various courts. From the apparent age of several of these personages we may reckon the period of his activity to have extended from about 1460 to 1475; the marble masks might perhaps fall somewhat later. Now there is, so far as I am aware, only *one* artist of any note to whom all this could apply—the sculptor and medallist, Francesco Laurana. We learn from the records concerning this artist, published during the last few years, that Laurana was at work on the Triumphal Arch of Alfonso I. of Naples probably by 1456-1458; then certainly in Sicily from 1468 to 1471 engaged in the execution of sculptures; in 1474 he was again in Naples, where he executed a Madonna statue to stand over the main door of the chapel of S. Barbara in the Castel Nuovo. Soon after that he must have gone to France, where he is mentioned until 1500. Thus 1476 to 1483 he is in Marseilles, where he directed the decoration of a chapel in the Église de la Major; between 1478 and 1480 he is alluded to as 'tailleur d'ymages' in the accounts of King René, by whose orders he erected the great marble altar for the church of S. Celestine in Avignon (now in S. Didier), but which was not finished till 1481, after René's death.[1]

[1] Heiss's idea that our Francesco Laurana is the metal-caster and chaser named Laurens who assisted in the execution of the mausoleum for Count Ferry II. in Nancy, seems to me un-

FRANCESCO LAURANA'S MEDALS

That the medallist Francesco Laurana, who was already in 1461-1466 in the service of that art-loving prince, as is proved by his name on the dated portrait-medals of King René and other personages of his court, is identical with the sculptor is confirmed from another side. In the Sicilian records dealing with the artist, for the discovery of which we have to thank Gioacchino di Marzo, Francesco Laurana is described as 'habitator urbis Panormi et civitatis Venetiarum.' It has recently come to light that he was a native of Lo Vrana (Laurana) near Zara, at that time belonging to the Venetians. In all probability we may assume the same of his older namesake, Luciano da Laurana, the famous architect of the palace of Urbino.

Though all the outward circumstances tend so conspicuously to show that this Francesco Laurana was the sculptor of the group of the busts and marble masks under discussion, the important question still remains as to whether the authenticated works of that artist display a sufficiently close relationship to those busts to warrant us in concluding that they are by his hand.

To begin with, we possess seven authenticated portrait-medals inscribed with Francesco Laurana's name representing King René, his consort, some of his courtiers, and Louis XI. of France. The peculiar pictorial low relief of these medals, the superficiality of their technique, increased by careless casting and the absence of chiselling, would hardly lead one to suppose that they and the marble busts were the work of one artist. On the other hand, they are not so absolutely divergent as to prove the contrary. The heads are all in profile, and that circumstance, combined with the indefinite outline, affords but little aid in a comparison with the extremely finished busts. Moreover, judging by the medals of Pietro da Milano (employed by René at the same time), so exactly similar in character that they can hardly be distinguished from Laurana's, the direct influence of the prince—himself an artist of some pretensions—is not improbable. But in such points as the busts do offer us for comparison—the small reliefs on the socles of the busts in Berlin and at Bardini's—a certain similarity is

tenable. From the name alone it is obvious that he hailed from the Netherlands. Besides, never would an artist of Francesco Laurana's standing—and he must by then have been well on in years—have stooped to the work of casting or chasing metal, for which in those days founders and goldsmiths were employed.

observable, particularly on the reverse of the medals, in the technique of the low relief, the pictorial treatment, the handling of the folds, and even in the figures. However, the execution is too indefinite and sketchy to justify any certain conclusion therefrom. Nearest to these medals come a couple of large profile portraits in low relief, both in Sicily. One is in the Museum at Palermo, and presents the nearly half-length figures of a middle-aged couple, French by their costume, and dating from the second half of the fifteenth century; in all probability members of René's court. The figures emerge from clouds, are placed one behind the other, and three-quarter face. The style of relief, the indefinite pictorial treatment, composition, and costume are in striking accord with the relief portraits on Laurana's medals. The second relief, the profile portrait of an ecclesiastic, was in 1887 in the storehouse of the University of Messina. An inscription of later date—probably not earlier than the seventeenth century — runs ΕΑΠΙCΗΤΟΥ ΒΟΕΘΟΥ COLLEGIUM PANORMIT · SOCIET · JESV · S · P · Q · M. The relief is unfinished, but even in that state shows the same characteristics as the double portrait, and comparing them with Laurana's medals it seems to me highly probable that both reliefs are the work of that artist.

It is a very different matter when we come to Francesco Laurana's larger compositions. From the evidence of the records, or of the sculptor's signature, we know of seven such works, all in marble. These are a Madonna statue of 1469 in the last chapel on the left side of the nave in the cathedral at Palermo; a similar statue of the same date in the cathedral at Monte San Giuliano; a third in the Chiesa del Crocifisso at Noto, bearing, besides the sculptor's signature, the date 1471; and a fourth, of 1474, over the porch of the S. Barbara chapel in the Castel Nuovo at Naples. Furthermore there are four large marble reliefs in 1469, two with 'Evangelists,' two with 'Apostles' in a chapel of S. Francesco at Palermo (here a certain Pietro di Bontate is named as collaborator); the High Altar with large 'Crucifixion' relief in S. Didier at Avignon, finished in 1481; and finally, the shrine of S. Lazarus at Marseilles, which he carried out in conjunction with Tommaso Malvito of Como. From its accordance with these authenticated Madonna statues, a marble Madonna in the Palermo Museum (in 1887 it stood in the room to the left of the court, ascribed to A. Gagini), may be counted to

the works of Laurana. In France they ascribe to him the tomb in the cathedral at Tarascon of Jean Costa (d. 1476), of whom he executed a medal.

The reliefs of the 'Evangelists' and 'Apostles' can hardly offer points for comparison; not so the Madonna statues, the heads of which bear so close a resemblance to the busts and masks I have described as to afford the strongest support to our attribution of that group to Laurana. All the most striking traits peculiar to those marble busts—in so far as they are not dependent on the individual sitter—are to be found again in these Madonna statues. The gentle inclination of the head, and its somewhat constrained pose; the slanting, wide-set eyes and drooping lids; the close-shut lips, the treatment of the hair, the way the veil falls over it, the bordering of the robes—all these characteristics are the same, even to the curious manner in which the hair is first merely sketched in and then finished by painting. In the method of colouring, too, and its extension to the hair and the ornamentation of the attire, these statues and busts are foreign to the style of the Florentine masters of the Quattrocento; but they find their analogy in the tinting of the older Sicilian and South Italian sculptures, a method to which the newcomer conformed, and ended by adopting as his own. This tendency to conform to local taste and methods is altogether a very marked feature of Laurana's art. Just as his Madonna statues follow in every respect the stereotyped figure of the Virgin carried from France into Southern Italy and Sicily by the Angevin rulers of the fourteenth century, so his altar in Avignon shows in its decidedly feeble composition, in structure, and even in the type of the figures, how much he was influenced by the local art of the period. This is partly due, no doubt, to the fact of his having been obliged to call in local assistance in the rapid execution of so considerable a work. Still, here too, the affinity of the heads of the women in the 'Crucifixion' relief to those of the Madonna statues and the busts is quite unmistakable.

The architectural framework of this altar and the background of the 'Crucifixion' relief, as also the rich framework and the vista of the Palermo reliefs of the 'Evangelists' and 'Apostles,' point us with no uncertain hand to the school in which Laurana got his training. The eye is at once struck by the skilful perspective of the backgrounds, the classical simplicity of the forms and details of

the architecture and the decoration. The foreshortened hall, the grooved pilasters with Corinthian capitals, the temple buildings with composite capitals and low octagonal cupolas, the delicate arabesques in the framework of the niches, we find again in the art of Northern Umbria, especially in the pictures of Piero della Francesca. Another circumstance that points to Laurana's sojourn in Umbria is that the great palace in the background of the 'Crucifixion' relief is conspicuously like the palace of Urbino. The builder of the palace, Luciano da Laurana, probably Francesco's uncle, was called from Pesaro by Federigo of Urbino in 1466; can Francesco have accompanied him? The latest of his medallions, produced while at René's court, is dated 1466; in 1468 Francesco is once more in Palermo; his sojourn in Urbino must fall between the two dates, when he must have executed the bust of Federigo's wife, Battista Sforza, now in the Bargello, which would agree with her age. His connection with Luciano and with Urbino is evident in a door-frame, in the Museum at Palermo, with arabesques of foliage up the sides and *putti* carrying garlands on the pediment, corresponding closely to several elaborate doorways in the palaces built by Luciano in Urbino and Gubbio.

As these works bear witness, Francesco Laurana was one of the most important agents in the introduction of the Renaissance into France—whether with favourable or unfavourable results, I will not enter upon here—and he shares with the Gagini the credit of having opened a path for the Renaissance in Sicily.

As a medallist, Laurana is not to be named in the same breath with the great Italian artists in that branch, such as Vittore Pisano; nor do his statues and reliefs approach the works of the great Florentine masters of the Quattrocento. But in his female busts Francesco has left us productions which are among the most captivating creations of the Renaissance. Though they cannot compare for vivacity and keen observation with the busts of the Florentine masters, yet in these portraits, with their peculiar demure air of modesty, combined with a delicate and high-bred reserve, in the taste of the composition in general and the extraordinary perfection of the flesh modelling, the artist has succeeded in giving us some of the most charming types of early womanhood it is possible to imagine. In the young princess of the House of Aragon, hitherto known as 'Marietta Strozzi,' the Berlin Museum possesses Laurana's

masterpiece, which, by reason of these peculiarly attractive qualities, is well deserving of a place beside Desiderio's princess of Urbino.

The preceding lines were just printed and on the point of publication when I received the unexpected news that the true bust of Marietta Strozzi had been found by Prince Strozzi in the Villa del Boschetto near Florence, where the rest of the family busts had been kept fifty years ago. The importance of this question to our Museum was sufficient to take me to Florence to settle the matter personally. What was my astonishment to discover that the marble bust of Marietta Strozzi, Desiderio's far-famed work, which we had thought to acquire ten years before with other art treasures from the Palazzo Strozzi, had, in reality, been in the Berlin Museum for fifty years! For the newly-discovered bust from the Villa del Boschetto is a free rendering, or rather a somewhat earlier copy, of that marble bust of a girl, acquired in Florence in 1842, which I have described as particularly characteristic of Desiderio, and set up as a standard for my criticism of that artist's work as a portrait-sculptor (cf. Plate LIV.).

The Florentine copy of this bust has suffered much from long exposure to the open air, and afterwards lying forgotten in a store-house among old furniture and blocks of marble. The tip of the nose is gone; the loops of hair broken off at either side, and then roughly replaced (since removed), and the whole hair unmercifully worked over again; while the whole surface is rough and weather-stained. It does not quite correspond with the Berlin bust; each bust is a perfectly independent work from Desiderio's own hand, and taken direct from Nature. Like Benedetto da Maiano with the two busts of Filippo Strozzi in Paris and Berlin, and Francesco Laurana with the busts in the Berlin Museum and at Stefano Bardini's (formerly at Alessandro Castellani's), Desiderio has employed the first work merely as a sketch-model on which, after several sittings from the original, to carry out the second bust. If the Berlin bust displays a marked realism, in this one, in which the sitter appears somewhat younger, it is still more pronounced. The shoulders are narrower and more sloping, the neck longer and bonier; but the modelling of the lips, cheeks, and chin, and the root of the nose are of a delicacy and absolute truth to Nature almost beyond our superficial modern observation. In these points the Berlin bust does not

show the same degree of freshness, it has been more arranged for effect. On the other hand, apart from the good preservation, it has the advantage over the Florentine bust in being more vivacious in expression and pose, and in the beautiful warm colour of the marble.

The costume, too, is not quite the same. The bodice of the Florentine bust is differently and more loosely laced, so that the folds of a thin undergarment are visible between the edges in front, and the folds in the sleeves run the opposite way to those of our bust. For our bust the sitter obviously leaned her arms on some support, whereas they hung at her sides while the artist modelled the bust in the Villa del Boschetto. The dress of the latter, particularly at the back, is very hastily treated, so that traces of the chisel are very apparent in parts. This is the case, too, with the hair, which—as far as one can judge now—was not arranged in a short thick loop at each side like that of the Berlin bust, but gathered into a thin kerchief and the ends only left loose.

To be sure, Prince Strozzi's bust is not provided with an inscription any more than the one in Berlin; but as Vasari tells us that Desiderio executed a marble bust of Marietta Strozzi, and as one of the two female busts in the possession of the Strozzi cannot represent Marietta, and is not (as I have shown elsewhere) by Desiderio, it is, to say the least of it, probable that in this newly found bust and its replica in the Berlin Museum we have at last the true portrait of Marietta by Desiderio. The probability is increased by the fact (recognised at once by Stefano Bardini on the discovery of the new bust which he immediately took to be the Marietta) that both busts exhibit Desiderio's peculiarities to a marked degree, and that the model is obviously exactly the age that Marietta must have been when she sat to Desiderio.

ANTONIO ROSSELLINO

BUST OF BOY

Museum, Berlin

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

THE BOY-CHRIST AND ST. JOHN BAPTIST

Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris

VII

PORTRAITS OF THE SONS OF NOBLE FLORENTINE FAMILIES IN THE QUATTROCENTO BUSTS OF THE BOY-CHRIST AND ST. JOHN

THE collection of Italian Renaissance sculptures in the Berlin Museum was enriched in 1900 by the gift of a child-bust rather under life size and executed in Florentine sandstone (Plate LVIII.). According to the former owner, it had been outside above the door of the oratory of a villa in the neighbourhood of Florence, and is said to have formed part of a whole figure—a Christ-Child in the attitude of benediction—which had fallen from its place and been broken, so that only the bust remained intact, and had not been restored to its former position.

That the bust stood long—probably from the first—in the open air is evident from its weather-stained appearance, the action of the rain being visible in parts. The fact of the head being slightly bent makes it very probable that the bust did originally stand in the lunette over a low church door. It is otherwise about the bust being merely a fragment of a whole figure, for apart from the fact that the rather soft stone—the ordinary kind of *macigno*—would, in such a fall, have been completely smashed, a closer inspection makes it evident that it was executed as such and never can have formed part of a whole figure. For both chest and back are no more than indicated, and, as is frequently the case with busts to obtain a firmer stand, curve out too much at the base. Were one to continue the body on these lines, the result would be simply monstrous. The story of the breakage has probably arisen out of the circumstance that the lower surfaces, particularly at the arms, are a good deal knocked about and that one arm stands away a little from the side, thus giving the impression of the benedictory attitude. It is not impossible that the sculptor should have given to a bust a whole arm and hand raised in benediction, but no

Florentine sculptor of the Quattrocento has done so to my knowledge; besides, the upper arm of our bust lies so near to the body that the elbow would come below the ribs, therefore considerably deeper than the bust line is or ever can have been.

However, the assumption that the bust is meant for a Child-Christ seems to me correct. To be sure, there is nothing to characterise it specially as such—no nimbus, not even the customary hole at the back of the head for attaching it. It is just a charming little child's head with strikingly individual features. But that Florentine art was particularly fond of representing the youthful Christ and just in that manner, is confirmed by several busts of this period which we must regard as depicting the Boy-Christ. First of all, there is the round bas-relief mentioned by Vasari as the work of Desiderio in the *Guardaroba* of the Medici. This turned up about fifteen years ago in the possession of the Marchese Niccolini in Florence, and is now in the collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris (Plate LIX.). In it the youthful Christ and St. John the Baptist, each plainly distinguished by nimbus and costume, are represented in friendly intercourse. Similar in conception is the beautiful bust of a boy lately owned by Frau Julie Hainauer in Berlin (Plate LX.). Like so many of the Florentine boy-busts this has been called the 'Giovannino,' but, from the cross in the gilded bronze nimbus, must be intended for the Christ, and was modelled from a real boy, probably a member of the Alessandri family, to whom the bust originally belonged. One or two other busts of similar character can be recognised as intended for the Child-Christ by comparison with the companion bust of the youthful Baptist, which is always distinguished by the goatskin. These are a couple of tinted terra-cotta busts after marble originals by Antonio Rossellino, which appeared in the sale of the Piot Collection in Paris, 1890, and two others in the Bardini sale in London (Nos. 425 and 426), most likely by Giovanni della Robbia in the manner of his middle period.

These representations of the Boy-Christ afford a criterion by which we are enabled to distinguish a number of the Florentine child-busts of the Quattrocento as intended for the youthful Saviour. In the above-mentioned busts and a number of similar pieces, the youthful St. John is characterised by wearing the goatskin and by rougher features and a graver expression. We may take it, therefore, that any busts having these distinguishing marks are always

ANTONIO ROSSELLINO

BUST OF THE BOY-CHRIST

Collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, London

DONATELLO

BUST OF THE BOY-BAPTIST

Museum, Berlin

intended for the 'Giovannino,' while those with the more refined features and smiling expression, and with only an indication of a little shirt or coat—such as one of the two marble busts in the Chiesa dei Vanchettoni, the child-bust owned by Gustave Dreyfus in Paris, and even the 'Laughing Boy' owned by Herr Benda in Vienna—are invariably intended for the Boy-Christ, and not the Baptist or simple portraits.[1] At that period, when portraiture was seldom employed and then only for the glorification of some eminent personage, the portrait of a child, as such, would have seemed unduly pretentious. But they saw no harm in reproducing the features of a beloved child in the busts or paintings of the Divine Boy to be placed in some church or private chapel.

Almost more than any other plastic works of the Quattrocento, these special child-busts give us a glimpse into the intimate life of the Florentine of those days. They show how religious sentiment permeated every class of the people, and how artlessly they mingled religious belief with the ideals of family life. The great charm of these busts and the closely related Madonna compositions of Florentine art lies in this naïve idealisation of home life, in the love for children and the pure cult of womanhood that speak to us from them.

The small bust of the Child-Christ from which we started out affords us guidance in the difficult question as to the authorship of these busts. The ravages of the weather, more or less severe in different parts, has scarcely affected the artistic character of the work; indeed, it imparts a peculiarly softened, picturesque appearance seldom found in marble busts. That we have here the work of some pre-eminent Florentine master of the Quattrocento is obvious at the first glance—but which? Ten or twenty years ago, one would simply have said Donatello; all such busts, if they were noticed at all, being attributed to him without further demur, and some are even to-day being so attributed. But our enlarged knowledge of that artist enables us to say decidedly that there exist no busts of the kind by Donatello; moreover, it is out of the question that he should have produced any such. They do

[1] When, as was the case with a couple of busts likewise in the Bardini sale in London (Illustr. Cat., Nos. 289, 292) both children are clad alike in the little shirt or coat, we may assume by comparing them with other copies of the same bust, such as those in the Piot sale (cf. p. 142), that the copyist has intentionally omitted the Giovannino's goatskin.

not begin to appear till the middle of the fifteenth century, and are the outcome of an intimate, more 'genre'-like point of view foreign to Donatello's art. As the true begetter of the *putto*, it may seem natural to attribute these child-busts to him; but in his representation of children, as in the case of his women, Donatello is not concerned with the individual; with his monumental tendencies he is content to give us the type. Hence, when for once he does model the bust of a child, he gives it a distinct typical character like the bronze Cupid-bust belonging to the Duke of Westminster, and the tinted clay bust of the 'youthful Baptist' in the Berlin Museum (Plate LXI.).

Donatello's most gifted pupil or follower, Desiderio da Settignano, at once strikes out a new line. To him the representation of the individual Child or Virgin figure is a never-ending joy, and he has depicted them with a freshness, a transcendent charm attained by no other artist before or since. The figures of children and of youths on his two chief works in Florence—the Marsuppini tomb in S. Croce, and the Tabernacle in S. Lorenzo—sufficiently bear out this estimate, and enable us also to designate as Desiderio's a number of children's heads, both in reliefs and as busts, in which he exhibits his peculiar charm in a still higher degree. In the tondo, so highly praised by Vasari, belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris (cf. Plate LIX.; formerly owned by the Marchese Niccolini in Florence), with the busts of the Boy-Christ and the young Baptist, Desiderio, still under the influence of Donatello, has sought to give a couple of typical figures. The 'Giovannino' he borrows direct from the older master, but with the Boy-Christ, his own conception, he has not been very successful. We find the most individual children's heads—of a diversity and freshness that not even Luca della Robbia can excel—in the cherubim medallions on the frieze of the Cappella Pazzi. It is true that Albertini, a compatriot of Desiderio, and scarcely a generation later, ascribes them to Desiderio and Donatello conjointly; but even were we unacquainted with Donatello's absolutely opposite types (the cherubim frieze in the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, and the cherubim in the crown of the Madonna statue in S. Antonio (Plate XXVI.) are sufficient evidence), a glance at the children on the tabernacle in S. Lorenzo would suffice to convince us that they were the productions of the same artist, and, moreover, his actual handiwork.

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST OF LAUGHING BOY

Collection of Herr G. Benda, Vienna

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

BUST OF A BOY

Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris

Desiderio modelled them most likely while Donatello was still in Padua. From the laughing or joyously singing mouths of these snub-nosed, chubby-cheeked youngsters, in the fearless glance of their large eyes, the guileless soul of childhood speaks and shines out to us free and open as the day.

Among the Florentine child-busts of this period the 'Laughing Boy,' in the possession of Herr G. Benda in Vienna (Plate LXII.), from the customary signs described above is probably a Child-Christ; a head belonging so entirely to the company of these cherubs on the Pazzi chapel that it can only be attributed to Desiderio and to that same period of his activity. A bust of the young Baptist, which passed from the Collection of Sir Charles Robinson in London to the Kann Collection in Paris, and is now in the possession of Messrs. Duveen Brothers, and a larger bust in the Museo Nazionale in Florence out of the *Guardaroba* of the Medici, and from the costume a pure portrait, are in complete accordance with Desiderio's figures on the monuments, and undoubtedly his work. Here, however, the models are past the boyish age, and consequently exhibit the characteristics proper to adolescence. With others among these busts one hesitates as to whether they still belong to Desiderio, or perhaps already to a follower. But all the signs are in favour of attributing to the great master a marble bust belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris (Plate LXIII.), formerly, as usual, assigned to Donatello. For vivid individuality, with all the incomparable freshness and charm of childhood, this bust is perhaps pre-eminent among the others described. The easy pose, the admirable flesh modelling, the way the little shirt is draped across the chest, the speaking lips, the frank open gaze, the natural arrangement of the hair—this is the language of Desiderio as we have learned to understand it in the children and youthful figures of his monuments, and in Herr Benda's 'Laughing Boy.' This likewise applies to a closely related marble bust of a boy (like the one just described, a young Christ) in the Chiesa dei Vanchettoni in Florence, and, with certain reservations, perhaps to another in Russian private possession in which one arm is left free. However, as regards the last-named bust in particular, another artist may have entered upon the scene: Antonio Rossellino, who, although a contemporary of Desiderio, looks to him for support.

In his best-known monuments—that of the Cardinal Prince of Portugal, the Piccolomini altar in Montoliveto at Naples, the St. Sebastian altar at Empoli, the Marcolinus sarcophagus in the Museum at Forlì, as well as in a considerable number of Madonna reliefs—Antonio Rossellino has fairly revelled in the presentment of childhood and youth, disguised as cherubs or angels. These works offer abundant material on which to base our estimate of Antonio Rossellino's share in the Florentine child-busts of his day, which must have been a large one. The smooth round faces and confiding expression, the curving mouths—the upper lip invariably projecting slightly in the middle—the graceful arrangement of the hair with a lock falling over the forehead, and the carefully disposed drapery, mark them as near relations of Desiderio's children, though a little older, a little more staid in expression. The small 'Giovannino' bust in the Chiesa dei Vanchettoni; the beautiful 'Boy-Christ' formerly belonging to Frau Hainauer in Berlin (cf. Plate LX.); the sympathetic Martelli bust of the young Baptist, assigned to Donatello, which might well be the companion to this 'Boy-Christ'; the marble bust of the 'boy-Baptist' in the Bargello (Plate LXIV.), as also a few known only in clay reproductions, may, from their accordance with his authenticated works of a like nature, be ascribed to Antonio Rossellino. To these, again, the bust of the 'Boy-Christ' in *pietra di macigno* in the Berlin Museum is so closely akin that there can be no doubt of its being the work of the same artist. It possesses, moreover, the advantage of having been modelled by the sculptor's own hand, without much preparation, straightway in the recently cut stone, instead, like most of the other busts, of being handed over to some assistant marble-cutter, which cannot fail to detract from their artistic value. In a marble Madonna relief of his in the Imperial Museum at Vienna, we find the same Child in a somewhat altered pose. A small bronze bust of the 'Boy-Christ,' very like ours, and very characteristic of Antonio Rossellino, is in the collection of the late Empress Frederick at Friedrichshof (perhaps merely a bronze cast of a marble original). Then there are a couple of very young baby heads much in Antonio Rossellino's style: the small bronze one in the Berlin Museum, of which other examples are met with now and then, and the extremely original baby head in tinted plaster in the Museum at Lyons, probably the reproduction of a bronze.

Brogi

ANTONIO ROSSELLINO
BUST OF THE BOY-BAPTIST
Museo Nazionale, Florence

Brogi

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

BUST OF THE BOY-CHRIST

Museo Nazionale, Florence

Antonio's elder brother, Bernardo Rossellino, whom we may regard as his teacher, gives us now and then in his later works such lovely childish heads that he may well have executed some such youthful busts. As his figures are somewhat constrained, and have a shy, grave air with them, a head like the profile portrait of a boy in *pietra di macigno* in the Louvre (No. 351), representing the youthful Christ, might very well be considered as Bernardo's, yet the modelling is so finished, the handling of the folds of drapery so graceful, that it is more likely to be the work of the younger Rossellino.

One of these busts of the Boy-Christ can be referred to one of the great sculptors of the first epoch of the Early Renaissance—to Luca della Robbia. This is the bust of a little boy in tinted and glazed terra-cotta in the Museo Nazionale in Florence (Plate LXV.). The masterly workmanship and profound sense of beauty and grace which distinguish all Luca's representations of childhood are here combined with a vivacious rendering of the individual traits of the model, which at once places this bust on a level with the best of Desiderio's portraits. There must have been many of these busts by Luca and no doubt by his nephew Antonio, but unfortunately of too perishable a material to stand the wear and tear of time. This we may surmise, too, from the fact that from the younger generation of the Robbias, probably Giovanni, we have a few such busts already mentioned, and these artists lived chiefly on the reputation of their great forebears, and were more than usually dependent on them in this direction.

But setting aside these late stragglers, the line of sculptors who modelled these inimitable busts ends with Antonio Rossellino, the most prolific artist of them all. Even by Benedetto da Maiano I know of no such busts, though his sturdy little figures with their merry, perfectly individual faces, fat necks, chubby cheeks and clustering curls would seem to mark his peculiar capacity in that direction. Nor have we any works of the kind by Mino da Fiesole, though his style was certainly less adapted to it than that of his Florentine contemporary, nor by Matteo Civitale nor Andrea del Verrocchio, both of whom have left us several delightful childish figures. In the case of several of these masters the fault may lie with untoward circumstance. Numbers of such small plastic works must have fallen victims to the neglect and vicissitudes of centuries;

again, one or other of these artists may have received no commission of the kind. But, broadly speaking, we must put down the lack of these busts by the end of the Quattrocento to the changes at work in the religious views of the day. The artless and familiar habit of thought which permitted the artist to use as a model for the 'Boy-Christ' or 'Baptist' any pretty child out of the family from whom he received the commission, had gradually to give way before sterner religious views. In place of the pretty 'Boy-Christ' and 'Giovannino,' came the 'Man of Sorrows' and the 'Preacher of Repentance.' The Reformation in Florence with Savonarola at its head, who from the pulpit denounced in scathing terms the impious use of such portraits for holy figures, made short work of these pretty Innocents.

VIII

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'GENRE' STYLE AND THE 'PUTTO' IN FLORENTINE PLASTIC ART OF THE QUATTROCENTO

IT follows inevitably that an art with such pronounced naturalistic tendencies as Italian sculpture of the fifteenth century should exhibit strong traces of the 'genre' in its style. And, in effect, the monuments of this period are full of it. Florence is in the forefront, and there we see even a master of Donatello's grand and monumental style revelling in devices which permit of a 'genre' treatment, or reproducing scenes of Florentine life with all his own peculiar virility and freshness.

Traits of this style are not wanting in Italian plastic art of the Trecento or even further back. The representation of the seasons, the months, the various trades, afforded sufficient opportunity; but besides, as if to make up for the monotonous repetition of sacred subjects, the artists gave the rein to their scathing humour where they had a chance, and in the hideous gargoyles of the waterspouts, in the scenes—gross, no doubt, but to the point—they carved on the undersides of the choir stools or the bishop's chair, they castigated the evils of the day, or the frailties of their spiritual pastors and masters. But the 'genre' of the Quattrocento in Italy, to judge from the works that have come down to us, was of a totally different character from that in the mediæval carvings. Above all there is in them scarcely a trace of caricature or bitter humour; and where anything of the kind does appear, it seems rather the outcome of the realistic tendency of the period to illustrate history, both sacred and profane, by scenes and models taken from the artist's immediate surroundings. And yet, thanks to the grandeur and religious sincerity of the conception, these subjects are in nowise degraded, but only made more vividly intelligible to the beholder.

The motive which in the second half of the Trecento, particularly in Florence, began to be treated in the 'genre' style is that of the Madonna and Child. The Madonna statues and statuettes of Nino Pisano have this character in a special degree. Mary Mother plays

with the Gesulino, shows him a bird, and offers him an apple or a flower, and the Child, his fair little body nude or clad in a tiny shirt, differs in no respect from the year-old babe of any honest Florentine citizen. This conception of the sacred group remains much the same throughout the fifteenth century, greatly owing to the fact that the artists who were chiefly instrumental in the transition of the art of the Trecento into that of Quattrocento, namely the clay modellers, showed a marked preference for this subject. They, and in equal measure their great successor Luca della Robbia, the master to whom are due the works in glazed clay, show us the Virgin and Child in a thousand different phases of that oldest game in all the world—between mother and babe; depicting it in more or less dignified style, but always fresh and always charming. This applies in part to Donatello's Madonna groups in that it accorded with his realistic tendency to represent the Child as very young or a helpless swaddled bundle, lying in his Mother's arms or in a little chair; and with his pupils and followers, such as Bertoldo, Agostino di Duccio and a number of anonymous artists, who merely produced more or less skilful variations on their master's famous themes, the charm of their Madonna reliefs rests chiefly on this 'genre'-like treatment of the subject. The younger generation of Florentine sculptors under the guidance of Desiderio da Settignano gives us the same idealised picture of the familiar life around them, full of delightful local colouring and tender charm. Numberless reliefs in marble, clay and plaster, and various statues and statuettes by Antonio Rossellino and Benedetto da Maiano exemplify this; but enchanting beyond them all is Desiderio's clay statuette of the 'Madonna and Laughing Child' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Plate LXVI.). It was this tender and familiar rendering of the Madonna group, so strikingly in contrast to its solemn and typical treatment in the paintings of the period, that endeared this branch of plastic art to the citizens of Florence and explains its enormous reproduction.

But none of these works can be described as pure 'genre.' Let the motive be as simple and as familiar, let the Child be taken as direct from life as it will, the conception of the Madonna always imparts a religious character to the whole. Even when an Antonio Rossellino or a Benedetto da Maiano frankly takes some pretty young woman of the neighbourhood for the model of his Madonna,

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO

MADONNA AND LAUGHING CHILD

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Alinari

Alinari

DONATELLO

CHILD-ANGELS

High Altar, Sant' Antonio, Padua

the treatment, the costume, the pose will always lift the figure above the commonplace; the artist will never fail to convey the impression that this is the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God. This is most marked in Donatello's Virgins, but even in those of Mino and Rossellino it is not altogether wanting. However, it is essentially the familiar and realistic treatment of the Child that lends these works their 'genre' character. Indeed, this conception of the Child is altogether characteristic for the plastic art of the Quattrocento; the only true 'genre' figure of that period is the Child and more particularly the 'putto.'

The Italian putto is not at all synonymous with the word 'child,' nor would boy, angel, or cupid be any more accurate. The putto is a specifically Italian conception, originating in Italy in the Quattrocento and not really at home in any other period. Under the direct influence of the Italian art of the Quattrocento, the putto gained a slight footing for a short time in Germany at the beginning of the sixteenth century, mainly through Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein, and the little masters. In the seventeenth century the Dutch school, headed by Rubens, revived the putto under fresh conditions and in another form, but, as it happened, first in Italy; and thence arose, as the last phase of his development, the putto of rococo art.

Like so many motives of the Quattrocento, the putto owes his origin to the study of the antique, for mediæval art has no knowledge of him; or if by chance he does occur, in imitation of some classic model, he is lifeless and unmeaning. The genii and cupids who played so large a part in late Roman, and even early Christian art, and whom the artists of the Quattrocento had ever before them on countless monuments, were undoubtedly the models on which the sculptors, with Donatello at their head, fashioned the putto to suit their own peculiar needs. For to the antique model they added the figure of the Christian angel in the form handed down from the Middle Ages: thus it is that the putto is mostly (with Donatello invariably) provided with wings, whereby he mingles with the angelic host or flutters gaily between the cherubim.

The putto is just at that enchanting age that knows no guile, when the consciousness of right and wrong still slumbers, but the increasing strength and activity of the little limbs drive the rogue into constant artless mischief. This is a world by itself, a paradise

of children, full of joyous life, undimmed by any tear; unconscious of the difference between man and the rest of creation, and where the mystery of man's twofold nature has no place. It is when he reaches this period of dawning independence, the age of chubby cheeks and dimpled limbs, before there is any question of the restraint of school, that the putto offers the first opportunity for separate artistic representation. Akin to the friendly pixie, the children's *kobold*, the putto is the good brownie to the sculptor of the Quattrocento; called into existence by him, the putto is ever at hand for use or ornament. To the Christ-Child he is playfellow, brings him some toy, or watches over him adoringly. From the cradle to the grave he guards and helps mankind. Beside the bier he stands and mourns, wreathes the tomb with garlands, or proclaims the virtues and glory of the dead. The putto takes the most active part in the decoration of the sacred edifices; flutters on to altars and shrines to festoon them with garlands of fruit and flowers, to loop up a curtain or draw it back; from some high ledge he leans down laughing, and never dreams of danger; up the twining tendrils of the pilasters he clambers among the leaves and blossoms, sports in childish glee with his fellows, or sings to the lute or mandoline. We find him on the fountains, where he drives the water through a pipe, or pours it from a vase, or hugs a spouting fish. Music and dancing are the putto's dear delight. Round the pulpits they skip hand in hand to music played by other putti; affording relief to the more sombre scenes from the Passion or from the lives of the Saints; they romp on the socles of the statues, or insinuate themselves into the ornaments on the robes, gleefully apeing the attitude or poking fun at the saintly person represented. From this side the putto of Quattrocento art is assigned a similar rôle to that of the satyr in the Greek drama.

The artist to whom we owe this delicious figure, and at the same time its most varied application to decorative art, is Donatello. To be sure, some of his immediate predecessors had made use of the putto, but more after the manner of the vase, palmetto, and numerous other ornaments borrowed from Roman art. The frame of the South Porch of the Duomo at Florence, the work of Piero Tedesco, and the similar decoration of the North Porch by Niccolò d'Arezzo and Antonio di Banco, are peculiarly rich and characteristic monuments of this nature, of which Florence possesses a number of smaller

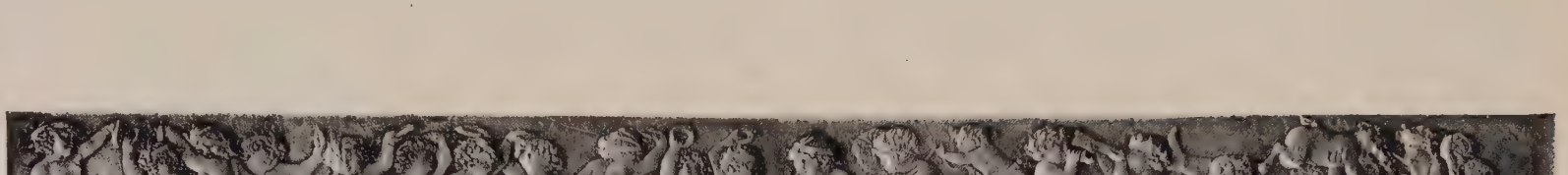
examples. But it was Donatello who first endowed the putto with flesh and blood, and raised him to his proper place and calling. How and where the great master employed him is familiar to all —are not his putto compositions among his most famous and favourite works?—the pulpit outside the Cathedral at Prato and the wonderful bronze capital which supports it (cf. Plate XVI.); the reliefs in the panels of the Cantoria in the Duomo at Florence, now in the Museo dell' Opera (Plates V. and VI.); the groups of children on the 'Annunciation' relief in S. Croce at Florence (cf. Plate IV.); the putti on the 'Tabernacle' in St. Peter's (cf. Plate II.); the joyous youngsters shouting aloud for glee on the Font in S. Giovanni at Siena, one of whom has just been acquired in London for the Berlin Museum; the small reliefs with the angels playing on instruments on the High Altar of the Santo at Padua (Plate LXVII.), and in the groups on various bronze plaques. On the helmet of the bronze 'David' in the Bargello putti are playing with the weapons of the young Hebrew warrior; and all over the saddle and armour of the 'Gattamelata' statue they are similarly engaged. On the ledge of the pulpits in S. Lorenzo (where they have been erroneously attributed to Bertoldo) they pursue their artless games above the deeply affecting scenes from the Passion; on the socle of the 'Judith' the artist uses their merry sports as a relief from the horror of the group above;[1] and they gambol unconcerned round the grave 'Evangelists' in the reliefs on the roof of the Sacristy of S. Lorenzo. Donatello's single figure of the putto is in nowise different. The well-known large bronze 'Cupid' in the Bargello, though so fantastically tricked out through Donatello's love for cryptic symbolism, is own brother to the little people we have just described. So are the bronze putti holding candelabra belonging to Mme. Edouard André in Paris; and in the marble fountain-putto of this collection, frequently copied by Donatello's pupils and followers, we have an example somewhat too realistic for our modern prudery.

As regards the further rendering of the putti, Donatello's followers copy their master with hardly an attempt at development —Buggiano sets clumsy putti on water-pipes and beside vases as decorations to the Sacristy fountain in the Duomo at Florence, and

[1] The group surmounted a fountain, and water spouted from the corners of the wineskin on which Holofernes lies in drunken slumber—hence the scenes of the socle relief where putti play at being intoxicated.

round a marble sarcophagus (wrongly ascribed to Donatello), but they are only stiff, dull imitations of similar ones by his teacher. Agostino di Duccio, and one or two anonymous followers of Donatello generally, add to their Madonna groups a number of angels in every way the same as putti, who amuse the Christ-Child with their lively gambols. Then there are the numerous reliefs and small single figures of putti which Agostino has scattered all over the interior decoration of S. Francesco at Rimini. The groups of piping and dancing genii on the socles of the great pillars frankly betray their descent from Donatello's putti, but they lack the life and strength breathed into them by that great master. The altar by Giovanni da Pisa in the Eremitani at Padua and Bertoldo's charming little bronze 'Bacchus Procession' in the Bargello (Plate LXVIII.) are both adorned with troops of delightful romping putti, whose family likeness to those on the bronze pulpits of S. Lorenzo, on the 'Gattamelata,' and on the High Altar of S. Antonio at Padua is apparent at a glance. The greatest of all Donatello's followers in Padua, his best pupil—though Donatello was not actually his master—Andrea Mantegna, took over the putto from the great sculptor, and with Giovanni Bellini, his brother-in-law, makes it one of the most fascinating figures of all Northern Italian painting till far into the sixteenth century.

A really new phase in the representation of the putto is brought about by Andrea del Verrocchio. While Donatello and his following invariably depicted them in groups, dependent as it were on one another like the amoretti of classical art, Verrocchio presents the putto alone, independent and self-sufficing. The bronze 'Putto with the Fish' on the fountain in the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence is his most classical monument of the kind; the clay model of a similar putto with a trumpet in the Dreyfus Collection, the youthful 'St. John' in the Berlin Museum, the putto with a bunch of grapes in his hand (therefore probably a little Bacchus) belonging to Herr Benda in Vienna, and the two recumbent putti designed for a tomb of which there are various examples, are all of them not unworthy companions to the first named. Also Verrocchio has introduced these figures into several of his pictures. In these figures, above all in the 'Boy with the Fish' (Plate LXIX.), Verrocchio has given the most perfect expression to the Child's first consciousness of his growing strength and power to stand alone, of



Brogi

BERTOLDO

BACCHUS-PROCESSION

Museo Nazionale, Florence

Brogi

VERROCCHIO

PUTTO WITH DOLPHIN

Palazzo Vecchio, Florence

his artless, unalloyed delight in the life that is beginning to open out before him. Once only has Verrocchio introduced putti in any number into a composition: the 'Magdalen carried up to Heaven' in a crowd of cherubim, of which there are several versions by the artist himself: in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Louvre, and the Bonnat Collection in Bayonne. The contrast between the glory of sweet childish faces and the grim, emaciated figure of the saintly anchorite is admirably conceived.

Antonio Pollaiuolo, Verrocchio's rival as goldsmith, sculptor, and painter, so often and so persistently confounded with him, differs from Verrocchio in that he concedes the putto no place in his art. When, on rare occasions (as companion to a 'Carità' or as supporter of an escutcheon), this figure appears in his works, it is very unchildlike, and altogether remote from the putto of his predecessors and contemporaries. Pollaiuolo lacked the humorous outlook absolutely essential to the right conception of the putto. Not so the somewhat older contemporary of these two sculptors, Desiderio da Settignano, who possessed the quality in the highest degree. And yet it is just to Desiderio, whose influence over Florentine sculpture reigns almost supreme during the second half of the fifteenth century, that the putto owes an essential limitation as regards his functions and importance in Florentine art. The peculiar fantastic world created by Donatello's mighty genius, despite his strong realism, was resolved by his less imaginative, but intensely beauty-loving, pupil into the quieter elements of everyday life — the familiar life of the Florence of the Quattrocento, it is true, but raised above the sphere of common things by the artist's delicate æsthetic sense and the purity and reverence of his conceptions. Thus under Desiderio Donatello's figures become simpler, more human, and Donatello's putti are transformed back into children of varying age—young angels or choristers step into the place that Donatello gave his putti. Only as heavenly playfellows to the Christ-Child and as cherubs in the friezes of his architectural works does Desiderio retain the putto, though in the exquisite and happy types characteristic of his other figures. The cherub frieze on the Pazzi Chapel and the angels and cherubim on the 'Tabernacle' in S. Lorenzo and the Marsuppini tomb are the best-known examples of this.

The putto retains this character in the works of Desiderio's followers, Antonio Rossellino, Benedetto da Maiano, Mino, and

Matteo Civitale. Putti sit mourning on the tombs, holding the pall, or stand beside the sarcophagus supporting the escutcheon of the deceased, or holding the inscription tablet which recounts his glorious deeds. They stand on the altars and hold up garlands of flowers that hang down to each side; like a wreath of full-blown flowers they form as cherubs the *mandorla* of the Virgin or fill the entablature of altars and shrines. But like Desiderio's they are all real individual types in no way distinguishable from the 'Christ-Child' or the 'Giovannino.'

In this naturalism of the Early Renaissance, charming, no doubt, but without initiative, and subsisting solely on the ideas of its predecessors, the vitality of the art of the Quattrocento was exhausted. The Late Renaissance had to enter at once upon the task of sowing fresh seeds, and could hardly have found a better prepared soil; for the general taste and sense of beauty and the feeling for architecture and decorative effect have scarcely ever been so highly developed as at the close of the Quattrocento.

In the foregoing review of the development of the putto in the Quattrocento one artist has not yet been mentioned who will at once occur to the mind beside Donatello whenever there is any question of the Italian putto. This is Luca della Robbia, the creator of the other Cantoria, decorated with playing and singing children, in the Opera del Duomo at Florence. But a glance at these lovely reliefs will make it sufficiently evident why Luca is of less account in this question than his important share in the development of Quattrocento plastic art would lead one to expect. Though Luca's art has certain traits of the 'genre,' it has none of Donatello's imaginative power. His compositions are faithful transcriptions of life; his children have none of that broad subjective character which marks the putto as created by Donatello. Luca's putti are simply child-figures of every age, from the helpless bambino to the half-grown boy, characterised in the most delicate and individual manner according to age and sex; and what gives these figures their peculiar charm and style and raises them far above mere commonplace reflections of everyday life is the artist's incomparable, absolutely antique feeling for beauty.

Luca's nephew Andrea, and the latter's son Giovanni—as long as he remained under the direct influence of his father—are both faithful followers of their great teacher in their representations of

the putto as of everything else. With them the putto is simply a lovely dimpled child of individual form, especially as regards the portrait-like heads. Andrea takes every opportunity of introducing children into his compositions; whenever possible he brings in a *mandorla* fashioned of the sweetest childrens' heads; he is the real originator of the frame of cherubs; he is the creator of the world-famed bambini on the Spedale degli Innocenti in Florence. Influenced by their contemporaries, both he and his son Giovanni go further still in their employment of the putto as a decorative adjunct. On the pediments of his altars and tabernacles stand children holding up heavy pendent ropes of fruit, or they sit singing or making music at the side of a vase or a candelabrum. Two little naked boys playing the bag-pipes (Victoria and Albert Museum) are a particularly charming example, while there are others of a like nature in the Museo Buonarroti, in the Museum at Lucca, etc. In the modelling of these figures Andrea seems to have been greatly influenced by Verrocchio. But he has also given us some distinctly 'genre' groups and childish figures. Thus in the Liechtenstein Collection in Vienna we have a putto playing with a squirrel, and the Berlin Museum possesses a frequently repeated copy in tinted plaster of a boy in a little garment who has taken a couple of puppies from their mother (Plate LXX.). Similar designs from the hand of this artist or at least from his workshop, though for the most part only in late copies, appear from time to time in Florentine art commerce.

Another figure, which may in a sense be taken as a putto, is the patron saint of Florence, St. John the Baptist, to whom the plastic artists of the Quattrocento in Florence imparted a strong measure of the 'genre.' Though in his several statues Donatello represents the Baptist now as a youth, anon as a grown man, and as one of the impressive character figures of Quattrocento, at the same time, in busts and reliefs he renders him as a somewhat older playfellow of the Gesulino. Herein he is followed by Desiderio and the sculptors of the latter half of the century. Rossellino's marble statue of the little St. John; Verrocchio's tinted plaster referred to above; a number of busts in marble and tinted clay or plaster, mostly referable to Desiderio or Rossellino, portray a merry little urchin of some five or six years in whom nothing but the costume gives a hint of the future Forerunner of the Saviour. Now it is the portrait of

some member of the family taken thus in honour of his name-saint, now simply a delightful figure out of the street. The latter is the case with the sturdy little 'Giovannino' at the entrance of a grotto in the Berlin Museum, which, being glazed, one would guess at first to be the work of some member of the della Robbia family; but neither type nor form agree with the style of any of those artists. For Luca or Andrea the boy is too ugly and too heavily built, and the thick-set limbs far too muscular; still less does he belong to Giovanni's fragile little figures. It must therefore have been modelled by some other artist who, if he did not glaze it himself, had it done in the della Robbia *bottega*.

The broad peasant face and muscular limbs of this figure are so extraordinary for a child of four or five that the sculptor of this work would easily be recognised in others of a like nature. And, in fact, I believe I am right in attributing to this same artist a whole group of works, almost without exception in clay, two of which were acquired for the Berlin Museum with the 'St. John in the Grotto' already described, while several others are in the Victoria and Albert Museum. These were all obtained in Florence, where similar pieces are still in private hands or to be found among the art dealers. Now these works, from their marked 'genre' style, are of special interest in the question under discussion. The sculptor, to whose name unfortunately we have not the slightest clue, goes further in this direction than any of his contemporaries in Florence or the rest of Italy; choosing, as a rule, motives taken direct from the street, though dealing exclusively with children. His groups of scuffling children, of which the Berlin Museum possesses the best example, while a companion to it and a larger much-damaged group in *pietra serena* are at the Victoria and Albert Museum, are so characteristic of the sculptor, so evidently part and parcel of his art, that his infant Christ in the Madonna group in the Berlin Museum, and the children round a 'Carità,' which occurs frequently in old replicas, are exactly the same boys and behave as roughly in their mother's lap as those others in the street.

Two of these groups appear to be companion pieces: the 'Struggling Children' in the Berlin Museum (Plate LXXI.) and a couple of 'Wrestling Boys' in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Both are modelled in clay and about ten centimetres high; the London group is damaged and much scraped, the Berlin one in good pre-

ANDREA DELLA ROBBIA

BOY WITH PUPPIES

Museum, Berlin

SCHOOL OF DONATELLO

STRUGGLING CHILDREN

Museum, Berlin

servation, even retaining its original coat of bronze, rarely employed at that early date. This was applied, as is apparent in the hollows, as a deep red-bronze powder laid directly on the clay, and with time has taken on a dark iridescent tone. The group shows two nude children, boy and girl, of about four, with musical instruments: the boy the pan-pipes, the girl the bag-pipes. But the boy has brought discord into this harmonious game by throwing his arm roughly round his companion's neck; the little girl struggles angrily against the boy's embrace and fastens her teeth in the hand he presses over her mouth. The realistic scene is admirably worked out, movement and forms are treated with equal vigour and truth to life. The thick-set figures, fleshy contours, and muscular limbs, the square-shaped heads and short, thick necks, all point to the modeller of the 'Giovannino in the Grotto.' Being unglazed, these figures seem less exaggerated, and the vigorous action accounts better for the unusual muscular development.

The companion group in the Victoria and Albert Museum (No. 253, acquired in 1876) is much the same in size and subject. Two naked youngsters, four or five years old, sitting together on a stone bench, are evidently quarrelling over the possession of a wine-skin lying at their feet; they have got one another by the hair and one bites the other's hand. The fact that the bronzing or tinting as well as the underlying layer of plaster is missing detracts greatly from the effect; the execution, too, seems altogether rougher and more hasty than in the Berlin group, and the figures shorter and still uglier.

This collection also possesses an almost life-sized kindred group in Florentine sandstone (*pietra serena*), but unfortunately only in fragments (No. 5769, acquired 1859): two naked boys who have fallen fighting to the ground. The scene, the muscular development and the thick-set figures of the boys, seem to me to point with certainty to the same master. A piece of ornament still attached to one of the figures leads to the inference that the group once formed part of some architectural decoration.

The identical forms and ugly coarse type of face appear in a life-sized clay bust of a 'Giovannino' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (No. 4496, acquired 1859). The 'tête carrée,' the bull neck, the flat snub nose, the wide coarse lips, the thick eyelids—all the characteristic signs of this group of children's heads are

present, only that, being on a larger scale, they are still more marked and unattractive.

For a fuller knowledge of this artist, and particularly for points whereby to determine the period of his activity and his 'School,' a Madonna statuette in the Berlin Museum (Plate LXXII.) is of special interest. The figure of the seated Madonna with her slender limbs, small head and long throat, the vivacious, almost coquettish attitude —qualities that make her akin to Desiderio's figures—and the way in which the mantle is drawn over the head and falls in waving folds after the manner of the Trecento clay-modellers, would certainly never lead one to surmise that this was the work of the sculptor of those groups of little fighting urchins. But the figure of the Christ-Child dispels all doubt upon the subject. The way the naked boy astride his mother's knee tears open her vesture in rude delight to get at her breast, the most unchildlike vigorous and muscular limbs, the unrefined, even ugly features and short thick neck: these are the traits that have become familiar to us in the children of this unknown artist.

And if this child were not sufficient to convince us, a similar small group of a 'Carità,' in parts identical with the Madonna statuette, would clinch the matter. Several examples of this group were in circulation at one time and another in Florentine art commerce, and one came recently into private hands in Berlin (Herr August Zeiss). The figure of Carità seated on a bench has almost the exact attitude and drapery of the Virgin in the Berlin group, except that the mantle is not drawn over the head, and instead of a book she holds a boy with the right hand (the right arm of one of these copies is bared to the shoulder). The head, spoiled, it is true, by modern touching up, is larger and lacks the charm of contour and pose seen in that of the Virgin; the tight-closed lips and weary eyes give it a hard, almost forbidding expression. The coarse modelling evident in the heavier contours of the figure is particularly noticeable in the muscular forms of the bare arm that would do credit to a *facchino*. On the left knee of the figure sits a naked boy, the same ill-conditioned little ruffian as in the Madonna group, and with the same gesture. To the right and left of the Carità stand two other naked boys, each with a flower in the right hand and looking up at the mother, but far exceeding the other child in ugliness of face and form. These two last figures are in all

SCHOOL OF DONATELLO

MADONNA AND CHILD

Museum, Berlin

RICCIO

INKSTAND, BOY WITH GRASSHOPPER

Museum, Berlin

the copies so hideous and clumsy, that it is quite impossible they can be by the master's own hand. We must suppose either that some unskilled copyist turned the Madonna group into a 'Carità' or —and this is the more likely from the frequent repetitions of the 'Carità' group—he made clumsy reproductions of an original work by the master. This is proved beyond a doubt by a second 'Carità' group recently presented to the Berlin Museum. The pose of the female figure is almost the same as that of the 'Carità' just described and of the similar Madonna, and so is the drapery. The hair is very gracefully arranged under a diadem. Here, on the other hand, is the naked putto standing on the knee of the Carità, a strapping, lively youngster, very characteristic of our Anonimo. As compared with the fuller 'Carità' group this is in every respect an admirable piece of work from the artist's own hand.

What he was capable of at his best is well shown in a Madonna statuette, obtained in Florence for the Berlin Museum in 1892, where the Virgin stands, holding on her right arm the undraped Child, who turns his laughing face towards her. By the excellent preservation of the tinting and the underlying coat of plaster, in which the finer details were worked in afterwards, this statuette affords the most reliable criterion for the artistic importance of the unknown master. The naked child with its robust limbs, strong movement and loud laughter, is instantly recognisable as the work of our anonymous artist. But in the figure of the Virgin there lies an unusual strain of grandeur; in her attitude with the left foot raised on a footstool, the pose of Mother and Child and the graceful disposition of the drapery, there is an unwonted calculation for effect which almost smacks of the Cinquecento. The heavy drapery on the top of the head is unfortunately broken off, so that the rich folds we see in the 'Madonna with the Book' are here missing.

These various groups give us ample points whereby to judge of the date of their production, and the position in Florentine art of their very unusual creator. They point to a follower of Donatello about the middle of the fifteenth century and perhaps a little later. The style of subject, and the robust forms of his types of children, might lead a superficial observer to judge them of much later date; and, in fact, the Berlin group of children was considered by the Florentine dealers to be a work of the 'baroque' period, and the group in *pietra serena* in the Victoria and Albert Museum is put

down in the catalogue as 'ascribed to Francesco San Gallo, about 1540.' But for the 'baroque' period the forms are too robust, for the Late Renaissance they are too realistic, and for both periods the conception is too unstudied and naïve. Compared with Verrocchio's putti, though undeniably akin, these little figures are heavy, ugly, unduly muscular, and unchildlike: all traits pointing to an older, more archaic artist. The figure of the seated Madonna in the untinted Berlin group shows the same tendencies; in the slender form and dainty pose the influence of Desiderio, therefore a follower of Donatello, and on the other hand, in the full drapery and strong folds the sympathy with the older Florentine clay-modellers of the first half of the Quattrocento. Those younger masters, such as Verrocchio and Antonio Pollaiuolo, who show similar tendencies in regard to vivacious movement and ample drapery, are nevertheless much more detailed and individual, and therefore less bold in their treatment of drapery.

Only a very small number of these 'genre' groups by our anonymous follower of Donatello, and of Andrea della Robbia's groups of children have come down to us, but there can be no doubt that small works of this class existed in great numbers at that period in Florence, both by these and other artists. Among them we may probably reckon Ghiberti's son Vittore, to judge by the two groups in his framework to Andrea Pisano's bronze doors, the naked children in which recall those described above. In bronze sculpture, too, we possess several examples of a 'genre' character; to be sure not so much in Florence as in Padua, where, however, it was a follower of Donatello, Andrea Riccio, who seems to have been specially active in this direction. Several little figures by him, very similar to each other, of a boy on the march, and true to life down to the smallest detail, are obviously intended for the youthful 'Tobias.' Three of these statuettes are in the Berlin Collection and two others in the Bargello. Bellano is very fond of these little 'genre' figures for objects of applied art, such as inkstands, candlesticks, etc. One occurs frequently of a boy clad in a little garment, carrying a large shell on his shoulders to serve as an inkstand. The most original piece of this kind is the bronze (Plate LXXIII.) on which a boy is trying to catch an enormous grasshopper, which has taken refuge behind the trunk of an old gnarled willow-tree. There is a hole among the thick roots in front for the sand, and another

in a stump of the tree to hold the ink. Hidden between the roots one discovers distorted faces as of unhappy spirits held there in bondage, and the foliage is treated in the same fantastic manner. Both in design and treatment all these figures point to one master, and judging by the sharply broken folds of drapery and the little square figures, we may take that one to be Bellano's pupil Riccio.

Yet though all these sculptors show such a marked preference for the 'genre' both in their groups and single figures, it still remains characteristic of them to limit that conception to the putto or child. In the Madonna groups where the Child is a simple little 'rowdy' the artist never fails both in composition and costume to distinguish the Virgin as the Mother of God. To what lengths a purely 'genre' treatment of biblical subjects might lead is shown in a few attempts of the kind made in Italy—not in Florence, be it said—such as the groups by the Modenese sculptor, Guido Mazzoni, and their prototype, Niccolò dell' Arca's 'Pietà,' in the Chiesa della Vita at Bologna.

As far as I am aware no works are preserved to show that any further development of the 'genre' in plastic art took place in Florence. However, here and there, we find such works referred to in documents. For instance, in a record published by Bertolotti in his *Arte minori alla corte di Mantova* there is mention of a singular humorous 'genre' piece of this kind. An official in the service of Frederick, Count of Mantua, notifies him in a letter of August 26, 1458, of the arrival from Florence of 'quattro visi de terra cotta de due vecchie e due grosse, che ridono insieme che pur è una consolatione da vedere, e chi li vede bisogna che voglia o non comenci a ridere.' Contemporary painters must have adopted such subjects constantly, as we see by the inventory of the Medici possessions, but undoubtedly it remained the exception with them as with the plastic artists. In all essential points the 'genre' in sculpture never went beyond that world of children and putti created by the Florentine artists. As well as in the naïve love of beauty and sense of religious awe, this fact had its origin in the high regard of the Quattrocento for the antique—and more especially in Donatello's relations towards it—which led the artists to strive as far as in them lay, even in their religious and sacred compositions, to follow or copy the great classical models. And it was this feeling—as well as an artless delight in childhood for its own sake—that created the putto on the lines of

the classical amoretto, and led to his extensive employment in the plastic art of the Quattrocento. Even Donatello takes the most of his putto motives from antique models. And the same applies to the 'genre' groups of his anonymous follower. But it must never be forgotten that though the Art of the Quattrocento was derived from and inspired by the Antique, it took the classical models and refashioned them after its own peculiar methods, and breathed into them the spirit of a new and realistic life.

IX

BERTOLDO DI GIOVANNI

I. Bertoldo's Bronze Statuettes

THE smaller specimens of Italian bronze sculpture have had an extraordinary vogue of late years with collectors. The interest in Italian medals was followed by the craze for plaquettes; but for the last ten or twelve years, since the stock of really good medals or plaquettes became so low that newcomers had little to hope for in that direction, there has been a positive craze for these bronze statuettes. Dainty figurines of fine workmanship of the fifteenth or sixteenth century command prices—even if the artist is unknown—hardly reached by the masterpieces in marble or clay of the great sculptors, before which, indeed, they are much preferred by private collectors. This was strikingly illustrated in the Spitzer sale, when an equestrian statuette by Riccio, of which there are several examples, rose to close on 50,000 francs, and 43,000 francs was paid for a modern replica of Vischer's portrait of himself on the Sebaldus tomb, whereas the whole of Antonio Lombardi's beautiful marble decorations from Ferrara put together fetched scarcely that sum. At the Seillière sale a somewhat larger group by so late an artist as A. de Vries went up to 65,000 francs; prices ranging from 20,000 to 40,000 francs have constantly been paid of late years for small bronze figures or groups, and now that market, too, seems on the point of exhaustion.

Serious interest in this branch of Renaissance plastic art has not kept pace with the collector's craze, in fact it can hardly be said to have received any attention from the real student. And yet the public museums afford ample material for comparative study. Thus the Museo Nazionale in Florence, already unique through its incomparable bronzes, has unexpectedly been enriched by

the addition of the very valuable Carrand Collection, the magnificent bronze collection of Venice recently brought together in the Archæological Museum of the Palace of the Doges and the Museo Correr in the same city; the Museums of Modena and Naples, the Imperial Museums and the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the Victoria and Albert, the Museum in Brunswick, and many others possess—most of them for centuries—a rich and varied collection of more or less important works of this class. Quite recently, too, the Louvre and, more especially, the Berlin Museum have added—by purchase or donation—sections for these small bronzes, which equal, when they do not excel, those of the older collections. Then numerous other museums, particularly in Italy, can produce small collections or single examples of these valuable small bronzes; so that without counting the private collections in Paris, London, and Berlin, there is more than sufficient, and easily accessible, material for extensive comparative study. And apart from the high artistic worth of many of these statuettes and their bearing upon the history of statuary as a whole, they afford much valuable assistance in our study of the relations of the Renaissance to the Antique, of the point of view of the Renaissance artist, of the development of bronze technique and similar questions.

The reasons why, nevertheless, our researches in this direction have been so few and far between, are the same as those which have caused our study of plaquettes to stop short at the first attempts in E. Molinier's book and in the illustrated catalogue of the Berlin Museum. These reasons lie chiefly in the difficulties imposed by the different standard of criticism and the peculiar medium, the presence of more or less mediocre copies dating from various periods, the deliberate imitation of the antique, and the employment of a number of little or unknown artists as bronze-workers. To this must be added the circumstance that by Donatello's long years of work in Padua, that one master became the originator and ruling spirit of the great foundries of Tuscany and Northern Italy, and through them of all Italy, thus inevitably ensuring a certain sameness of manner among the artists which greatly increases the difficulty of deciding between their works. To the large majority of this small statuary are attached such names as Donatello, Pollaiuolo, Riccio, and for the later period,

Jacopo Sansovino and Benvenuto Cellini, but a closer inspection usually proves them mythical in this connection.

However, the most satisfactory way of dealing with the authorship of these little bronze figures is to separate into groups those that show affinity to one another, and either seek to refer them to some known artist, or, where that is not feasible, to give the group a distinctive name. My object in the following study is to show that a number of these statuettes and other small bronze works may with certainty be ascribed to one of the most important among Florentine bronze sculptors, Bertoldo di Giovanni, to whom recent critics have very justly attributed—besides the 'Battle of the Horsemen' described by Vasari—a variety of bronze reliefs, medals, and plaquettes.

Bertoldo's name has been handed down to us as a pupil of Donatello and teacher of Michelangelo; we know that he was attached to the House of Medici, that he maintained the closest relations with Lorenzo, to whose immediate retinue he belonged, and was curator of his Art collections and in them taught his pupils. At his death in Lorenzo's Villa Poggio a Cajano on December 28, 1491, a contemporary thus mourns the heavy loss: 'There was not in Tuscany, yea, not in all Italy, another artist of such noble gifts and such skill in this domain of art.' It would seem natural with regard to an artist of such renown, who had been respectively pupil and teacher to the two greatest sculptors of Italy, and belonged to the Magnifico's nearest surroundings, that we should have the most detailed account of his life, if not from tradition, at least in contemporary records. Yet there is hardly another Florentine artist of whom we know so little. The short notice quoted above by Bartolommeo Dei on the occasion of his death, a letter of his to Lorenzo de' Medici of July 29, 1479, which gives evidence of the intimate relations between them, finally, a short reference here and there, likewise relating to his connection with Lorenzo, are all the contemporary information we possess regarding him. Nor does there seem any prospect of gleaning further knowledge from the records.[1]

Not one of these meagre notices in the artist's own lifetime

[1] Signor A. Gherardi of the Florentine Archive Office, who was kind enough to search through the records and letters of the time of Lorenzo for information relating to Bertoldo, tells me that the only trace he found was a short entry among the letters of Lorenzo to

says a word about his work—Bartolommeo Dei's few vague words of praise excepted, wherein he lauds Bertoldo as 'scultore dignissimo e di medaglie optime fabricatore, il quale sempre col magnifico Lorenzo faceva cose degne.' And Vasari's remarks scattered here and there among his writings are scarcely more than a repetition in other words of Dei's opinion. 'Era maestro molto pratico,' he says in his *Life of Buonarroti*, 'e molto riputato, non solo per avere diligentissimamente rinettato il getto de' pergami di Donato suo maestro, ma per molti getti ancora che egli aveva fatti di bronzo di battaglie e di alcune altre cose piccole nel magisterio delle quali non si trovava allora in Firenze chi lo avanzasse.' In his life of Donatello he mentions Bertoldo briefly among the pupils of that master: 'L'imitò assai come si può vedere in una battaglia in bronzo d'uomini a cavallo molto bella, la quale è oggi in guardaroba del Signor duca Cosimo.' This bronze, large for its kind, is in high relief, and is still among the art treasures of the Medici in the Museo Nazionale in Florence (Plate LXXIV.): the centaur put down in the inventory of the '*guardaroba*' has not yet been identified with certainty (cf. p. 173). Yet another piece, in its way to be classed with the 'Battaglia,' is mentioned by Gian Marco Michiel. This is the bronze group of 'Bellerophon and Pegasus' (Plate LXXV.) which in Michiel's time was in the possession of Alessandro Cappella in Padua, but was rediscovered by Louis Courajod among the bronzes of the Austrian Imperial Collection, and furthermore authenticated by the inscription on the socle: EXPRESSIT ME BERTHOLDVS CONFLAVIT HADRIANVS. A third work, likewise bearing the artist's signature, is the Medal of the Sultan Mahomed II. (Plate LXXX).

On the basis of these authenticated productions Hugo von Tschudi pronounced a few bronze bas-reliefs in the Museo Nazionale (likewise among the Medici Collection) to be Bertoldo's work. These comprise the delightful little frieze (Plate LXVIII.) with *putti* drawing the car of the drunken Silenus (judging by the *imprese* on the car, executed for Piero de' Medici); a larger 'Crucifixion' showing SS. Jerome and Francis beside the relatives of the Saviour (mentioned in Lorenzo's inventory but without a name); finally

his son Piero, under December 28, 1491 (the day of Bertoldo's death): 'a maestro Stefano de Prato che medica Bertoldo, risposta ad una sua'; but unfortunately the letter itself was missing.

Brogi

BERTOLDO

BATTLE OF THE HORSEMEN

Museo Nazionale, Florence

Frankenstein, Vienna

BERTOLDO

PEGASUS AND BELLEROPHON

Hofmuseum, Vienna

a relief of a 'Pietà,' of which there is a somewhat later but badly chased replica in the Louvre. These reliefs were originally put down to Donatello and (the two latter) to Antonio Pollaiuolo, and afterwards by me in the *Cicerone* to Agostino di Duccio. But their new attribution to Bertoldo is acknowledged in the sixth edition of the *Cicerone*, as also by Semrau in the particularly felicitous section of his book on 'the Pulpits in San Lorenzo,'[1] in which he deals with Bertoldo, and they have recently been put under his name in the Bargello.

The same pronounced traits prevail in all these works, as the artist is concerned to impart a thoroughly typical character to his figures, composition, foreshortening, treatment of the relief, etc. The sharply defined anatomy of the figures is very noticeable: the bony structure of the body, especially of the chest and ribs, is very prominent, whereas the lower parts appear drawn in; the thorax is invariably wider than the hips—more or less so according to the action—and the muscles of the neck are strongly emphasised. The extremities are small, the head square and usually prominent at the back, the mouth small, shapely, the nose aquiline, small almond-shaped eyes set wide apart, small ears set abnormally far back—all these features are typical. The hair is treated in broad waves, the beard curly and usually short and square. The hair of the female figures is arranged in long parallel strands. This arrangement corresponds to that of the drapery, which hangs in broad, straight folds, or where there is movement flutters like wide ribbons round the limbs clearly outlined beneath it. However, this mannerism is not so marked as with his countryman Agostino di Duccio. Bertoldo's treatment of relief is distinctly pictorial, hence his preference for extreme foreshortening, high visual point, and low relief. The 'Battle of the Horsemen' in high relief is an exception, because on this occasion the artist took an antique sarcophagus for his model. His relief figures, even in the very high relief of the 'Battle,' are always pictorially foreshortened; on occasion he even adopts this method for his figures in the round, for example in the 'Bellerophon' group, perhaps because it was intended

[1] The question as to Bertoldo's share in the pulpit of San Lorenzo does not come within the scope of this study. In my opinion the artist had no independent part in the framework, the *putti* friezes, etc., as I have sought to prove elsewhere (*Denkmäler der Renaissanceskulptur Toscanas*).

for a niche and was to present the effect of an alto-rilievo. We find Michelangelo's favourite opposition in the pose of the upper and lower part of the body very frequently in the figures of his teacher, though not in so marked a degree; obviously his aim was to obtain as piquant an effect as possible for the various points of view (cf. pp. 191 *et seq.*).

On the strength of these marked peculiarities, gathered from the sculptor's authenticated works, a number of other reliefs, bronze statuettes, and medals can be added to Bertoldo's account.

A large and charming plaquette, closely akin to the relief in the Bargello, was presented to the Louvre by the great patron of that Institution, His de la Salle. It shows the Virgin standing in a niche, at her feet stand four nude child-angels playing on instruments and dancing, and above, on either side of her, two others playing with the Infant-Christ. The children show the same modelling as those in the frieze in the Bargello, although it is chased, while this plaquette is a rude wax mould; the style of foreshortening is the same, so is the treatment of the hair and the extremities. The Madonna, on the other hand, corresponds in every way to the female figures in the 'Battle,' and still more so to those of the 'Crucifixion' in the Bargello, and, like the latter, is in low relief.

A second, rather smaller plaquette, which passed from the Spitzer Collection into private hands in Paris, must, in my opinion, be likewise assigned to Bertoldo, though in it his peculiar characteristics are not quite so marked. It depicts a centaur carrying a woman on his back, while to right and left stand satyrs, one of whom scourges the woman and the other grasps her by the hair—some allegorical allusion probably. The relief is higher than usual, and the fact of the relief being merely a rough cast is against it at the first glance, but a closer study will show that the technique of the foreshortening, the type of the heads, the treatment of the hair, all point unmistakably to Bertoldo, despite the sketchy handling.

Three statuettes, all representing nude men, quite corresponding to Hercules, proclaim themselves convincingly as the works of this artist. The smallest of the trio was bought years ago by Prince Liechtenstein from private hands in Florence and placed among his fine collection of bronzes in the Decius Mus Room. 'Hercules' stands shouldering a heavy club with his right hand, his left supporting a shield, the arms on which appear to have been those of

BERTOLDO

HERCULES

Collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, London

BERTOLDO
THE 'SUPPLIANT
Museum, Berlin

the Este. It is therefore, doubtless, not Hercules, but a savage who is represented, a figure usually represented in the arms of the house of Este. A trail of vine is wound round the loins, and a chaplet of fruit crowns the head, which is turned sharply to the left, looking over the shoulder. The whole figure accords so completely with that of the captive on the extreme right of the 'Battle' that it is impossible to doubt the common origin of the two, though the contours of the 'Hercules' are fuller—exceptionally so for Bertoldo—maybe to carry out the idea conveyed by his Bacchic attributes. A pendant to this figure was recently added to the collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan (Plate LXXVI.).

Another, somewhat larger bronze was brought to light a few years ago, and placed in the newly arranged Museum at Modena. Here the man is mounted, a lion skin slung about the naked limbs, in the left hand he holds the vine-decked club and looks back, like the Liechtenstein statuette, over his left shoulder. The horse has a necklet of vine, and a heavy festoon of fruit is looped over his body and fastened just behind the rider by a ram's head, but what its object is, or what it is meant to symbolise, remains a puzzle to me. The man, especially the head, bears the closest resemblance to the Liechtenstein statuette, the St. Jerome of the 'Crucifixion' relief, and several of the warriors in the 'Battle.' The horse, too, has the thick neck and the extraordinary protuberances over the eyes and on the cheek bones, even more conspicuous in the horses of the 'Battle' than in the 'Pegasus.'

Neither of these representations of the hero conforms to the antique, but a larger statuette obtained in England for the Berlin Museum is simpler and more severely classical in conception. With the left hand he leans upon the club, while the right, in which he holds the lion skin, rests on his hip; here again he looks sharply to the left. Bertoldo's familiar characteristics are so marked in this statuette that one has but to compare a photograph with that of the authenticated works, more especially the figures in the 'Battle,' to make further argument unnecessary. Less vivacious in conception than the other Hercules figures and that of the savage, this statuette is, next to the 'Bellerophon,' the most imposing figure by Bertoldo yet discovered, and is moreover of special interest from its relation to Michelangelo's 'David' (cf. p. 194).

Soon after acquiring the 'Hercules' the Berlin Museum

obtained two bronze figures bearing equally distinct signs of Bertoldo's workmanship. One, about the same size as the 'Hercules,' is a kneeling 'St. Jerome' holding in the left hand a crucifix (missing) on which he turns his penitential gaze, and in the right a stone wherewith to beat his breast. That the details both of anatomy and drapery are much less distinct than usual is probably due to unskilled casting, in which Bertoldo was anything but proficient, as we shall presently see. The long pointed beard, too, is an unfamiliar feature, but accords far better with the character of the anchorite than Bertoldo's favourite 'barbe carrée' which the Saint wears in the 'Crucifixion' relief in the Bargello. Otherwise the anatomy, particularly as regards the chest, the shoulders and the neck, the form of the head, the shape and setting of the eyes, the nose, the treatment of hair and beard, the parallel folds of drapery and the peculiar twist of the torso, are all in the unmistakable manner.

His hand is, if possible, still more evident in a somewhat smaller bronze male figure, for whom I can as yet discover no suitable name (Plate LXXVII.). It is the nude figure of a young man with short curly side beard and beautiful thick and waving hair, looking upwards with an imploring gaze, the left hand laid as if in solemn assurance on his breast, while in the right he holds out a round object flattened at the top. Attitude and expression might fit an Adam, but the object in his hand could by no possibility be an apple. In the first place it is much too large; it looks more like a rudely cut stone, and, moreover, has a hole in the smooth upper surface from which one would infer the existence of an upper piece now missing to complete the whole. But in its present condition it remains unintelligible, and the figure consequently impossible to name, I fear. In England it went by the name of the 'Slave' or the 'Gladiator' from the prevailing idea that the roll round the right ankle was a ring. But I take it rather to be the folds of a leather stocking seen almost identically on the captive to the right of the 'Battle,' in which case, too, the toes are plainly indicated as if the foot were bare. This would lead one to surmise that the artist meant to represent some antique figure; beyond that it would be impossible to guess. Hardly a figure of them all, except the 'Bellerophon,' bears Bertoldo's sign-manual written so clearly all over it as this one, and with so favourable an effect. The anatomy is emphasised on Bertoldo's familiar lines, but the contours of the beautiful figure are far softer and rounder than

BERTOLDO

HERCULES AND THE LION

Collection of Mr. G. Salting, London

BERTOLDO

NEGRO AND LION

Collection of M. Edmond Foulc, Paris

we are accustomed to with this master. The head, both in shape and detail, is of the invariable type, but finer and more individual, and the face lighted up by an unwontedly touching and convincing expression. Again we have the artist's favourite twist in the relative position of the torso and the hips, but in this case it is admirably carried out, and only heightens the effect of the attitude and expression.

The bronze is much and carefully worked up, the chasing, where it is not quite so highly finished, leading us to conclude that the cast was very rough and unsatisfactory. Taking this in conjunction with the conspicuous carelessness displayed in other bronze casts by Bertoldo, it would seem the artist's chief work began only with the chasing, and of this we have very striking proof in the violin-playing 'Arion' (more correctly, perhaps, Orpheus or Apollo) in the Bargello. The head and legs of this statuette are carefully finished, whereas the chest and arms are mere rough lumps of bronze scarcely showing the contours. As a consequence of the rough inadequate casting the artist was obliged to work up the bronze with fine chisels, files, and similar tools, almost as if it had been marble. No wonder, therefore, that having later on discovered in his pupil, the Florentine Adriano, a great aptitude for this branch of work, he employed him for the casting of his bronzes, as he proves in the signature of the 'Bellerophon.' That the 'Arion' is a genuine Bertoldo is shown not only in the characteristic attitude which, though perfectly true to nature, is somewhat affected, but in the modelling of the head, the eyes, the hair, the muscles, the extremities, which all exhibit the wonted idiosyncrasies of the artist.

In the catalogue of Lorenzo de' Medici's Collection there stands under Bertoldo's name a bronze centaur ('uno centauro di bronzo di mano di Bertoldo'). This is perhaps the small group in the Berlin Museum showing a centaur with uplifted sword and shield and carrying a woman on his back. The type of the heads, the treatment of hair and beard, correspond exactly to the authenticated works of the artist, whereas the stiff formless equine body, and the full contours of the female figure, seem hardly to fit in with Bertoldo's style. This, very probably, is because the Berlin group is not the original of the Medici Collection, but a contemporary and reduced copy. This view is strengthened by the fact that fragments of two other replicas on the same scale are preserved in the Imperial

Museum at Vienna, the female figure in each instance being superior in technique to that in the Berlin group.

Two other groups are to be added to these, inasmuch as they are, without doubt, authentic works by Bertoldo: 'Hercules slaying the Lion' in the collection of Mr. G. Salting in London (Plate LXXVIII.), and a nude negro on horseback attacked by a lion, in the Foulc Collection in Paris (Plate LXXIX.). Both groups rank with the best the Renaissance has produced in this style, both in their skilful arrangement and also in the life and truth of the representation and fidelity to nature of the figures and of the animals, particularly the lion.

II. Bertoldo's Medals

The number of bronze figurines attributable to Bertoldo will undoubtedly be greatly increased as time goes on, and especially when the private collections in England and Paris have been more thoroughly studied. For Bertoldo's own contemporaries praised him highly for his skill in the production of small bronze objects of every description, to which, as far as we have any knowledge, he seems to have devoted his whole attention. But he is especially mentioned as a medallist: it is therefore not a little strange that up to the present only one medal of his is known—the one of Sultan Mahomed II., already referred to as bearing Bertoldo's signature. Is it likely that Bartolommeo Dei, writing to acquaint Bertoldo's uncle with the news of that artist's death, would have alluded to him as 'di medaglie optime fabricatore' had he never executed but that one medal? We are therefore right in looking about for others similar to the Mahomed medal which shall prove the justice of this eulogy.

But it is useless to shirk the fact that for a really critical study of Bertoldo as a medallist we must begin by ruthlessly breaking away from most of the old-established opinions regarding him and the older Florentine medallists. Far be it from me to say anything to the prejudice of the older authorities on this subject. Bolzenthal and the authors of the *Trésor de Numismatique* did wonders for their times; Friedländer brought the searching criticism of antique numismatic art to bear on the medal; Heiss in his works (unfortunately quite unnecessarily luxurious and expensive) has gathered together ample material for further research; and in his catalogue of

Italian medals of the Renaissance, Armand has produced a model work of the kind. But in every one of these works the sole criterion and standard applied was that of numismatics. Only rarely, and then superficially, have medals been dealt with from the point of view of their historical connection both as regards the personage portrayed, or the history of art in general, and of contemporary plastic art in particular. Yet these are important points to be considered if we would read these medals aright and determine their authorship. Indeed, for the Florentine master-medallists of the Quattrocento they are most important of all; for numismatists have less in common with those particular masters than with any other medallists in the Italy of that period.

The habit of clinging to old traditions and old methods is chiefly to blame that our knowledge of early Florentine medals is so incomplete and, in the main, so incorrect—far more so than of any other branch of the Art of the Renaissance, not excepting even that of the great craftsmen hitherto so sadly neglected. Another cause of confusion has arisen out of the lettering frequently found on the medals of this period. Instead of connecting them with mottoes and the like, they have been taken for the monograms of the artist and the medal attributed to any one whose name happened to fit. A brief survey of the artists to whom the Florentine medals of the fifteenth century are usually attributed will illustrate the results of this procedure. First comes Michelozzo, to whom the medals cast for Cosimo de' Medici are assigned, although they have not the remotest affinity to his other works, and moreover were executed during the reign of his son Piero, a period when Michelozzo was absent from Florence. Then, on the strength of Vasari's statement, Antonio Pollaiuolo was named as the author of the well-known medal commemorating the Pazzi Conspiracy, and therefore of certain other Medici medals which ought, as I shall presently show, to be attributed to Bertoldo. To Andrea Guazzalotti, an ecclesiastical amateur with some superficial skill in portraiture, but entirely without initiative, who borrowed the figures for the reverse of his medals from those of other artists, some of these very medals have been attributed. I myself must plead guilty to making Benedetto da Maiano into a medallist because there exists a beautiful medal to Filippo Strozzi, whose favourite sculptor Benedetto was. Even to Filippino Lippi medals have been attributed which are actually

masterpieces by Cristoforo Romano. To Giovanni della Robbia the Savonarola medals have been assigned, simply because Vasari mentions his having executed a small portrait relief of this friend of the della Robbia family.

But Niccolò Sforzore Spinelli has fared worst of all. The stamp-cutter Nicolas Spinelli referred to at the Court of Charles the Bold; the medallist Niccolò Sforzore Spinelli, who was in the service of Charles VIII. of France and lived for a time in Lyons, where he is supposed to have died in 1499; and the artist of the same name whose signature is on the medals of Lorenzo de' Medici and of several other Florentine nobles, and who died in 1514, are made out to have been two, if not three, different persons. His immense '*œuvre*,' comprising three times the number of that of Sperandio, accounted the most prolific medallist of the Quattrocento, is then distributed over a series of fabulous artists who are dubbed, in accordance with the reverse of the respective medals, the artist of 'the Eagle,' or 'Hope,' or 'the Fortuna,' to whom might be added with quite as much sense 'the Graces' or 'the Constantia' and so on. All these medals have the same strongly marked, broad traits in the reverses, which the artist kept very simple in character and was fond of borrowing from other designs, especially the antique, because he knew that imagination and correct drawing were his weak points. But to do complete justice to this artist (who, though unequal and often careless, is worthy as a portrait-modeller to stand beside Vittore Pisano), would necessitate arduous researches in the archives of the period as to the personages he portrayed, his relations to other artists of his day, and the attitude of Florentine art towards the contemporary art of the Netherlands—all questions which have scarcely been touched upon up to the present. However, my aim here is to give one of these artists, namely Bertoldo, his rights as a medallist, and I merely touched upon the foregoing points to show how much remains to be done and in what direction these further researches should be made.

Armand already assigned to Bertoldo, besides the Mahomed medal, that of the Venetian Letitia Sanuto, for the excellent reason that, despite its sketchy treatment, the reverse showing the 'Triumph of Chastity' corresponds exactly in grouping, figures, and technique with the 'Triumph' on the Mahomed medal (Plate LXXX.). The reverse of an unknown medal of Bertoldo's is preserved to us

in a plaquette, copies of which are in the Dreyfus Collection in Paris and in the Berlin Museum. It has always been known by that artist's name, no doubt because, like the reverses of the Mahomed and the Sanuto medals, it depicts a triumphal progress. The low pictorial relief, the modelling of the horses, the figure of the youth running before the car, the fluttering bands of drapery, all correspond exactly to the reverse of the Mahomed medal and other small reliefs by Bertoldo.

Both the Sanuto and the Mahomed[1] medals seem to point to Bertoldo's connection with Venice, which would be confirmed by Gonzati's statement that in 1483 the artist was commissioned to execute two bronze reliefs for the inner side of the Choir screen in S. Marco.[2] But is it likely that Bertoldo should have executed no medals in Florence just where his fame as a medallist was established, so that he was never employed in that capacity by his patron Lorenzo and others of the Medici? Among the Medici medals of the second half of the fifteenth century—the only period to be considered here—there is one attributed since Vasari's time to Antonio Pollaiuolo. This artist was likewise credited with the Bertoldo bronze plaques of the 'Crucifixion' and the 'Pietà' in the Bargello; in all probability on the strength of their close affinity to this very medal. But has this statement by Vasari, whose opinions just in the matter of medals must be taken with the utmost caution, any real foundation? It has no verification in official records or other documentary sources of information, and as regards its style, neither this medal commemorating the Pazzi conspiracy against Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici (Plate LXXX.), nor a second very similar one for Filippo de' Medici, Archbishop of Pisa shows the slightest affinity to the authenticated works of Antonio Pollaiuolo or his brother Piero. There is no trace of the peculiar high relief, the slender figures with small heads, and the uneasy crumpled folds of drapery we see in Antonio's reliefs on the two Papal tombs in St. Peter's and in the silver relief on the reredos in

[1] It was probably taken from Gentile Bellini's portraits of the 'Grand Turk,' whether from the medal, the painting, or the drawings which Bellini also lent to Pinturicchio for his frescoes in the Borgia room of the Vatican.

[2] These were 'The Passage through the Red Sea' and the 'Jonas.' According to Gonzati, though unfortunately he does not cite his documentary authority, the cartoons were rejected ('i getti di Bertoldo fu Giovanni di Firenze non riscossero approvazione,' i. p. 136), and Bellano received a commission in 1484-5 for the same subjects.

the Museo dell' Opera in Florence, characteristics to be found in all the artist's pictures, drawings, engravings, niellos, and the tapestries from his designs illustrating the Life of the Baptist.

The Pazzi medal depicts in low relief the murder of Giuliano de' Medici at the high altar in the Duomo; above the edifice is his bust. On the reverse side Lorenzo's escape, likewise surmounted by his bust, is treated in the same manner. The medal for Filippo de' Medici, who was Archbishop of Pisa from 1461 to 1478, has his portrait on the obverse, and on the reverse the 'Last Judgment,' in very small figures and low relief, corresponding exactly to the style and technique of the Pazzi medal. Both medals are characterised by sketchiness of design and absence of chasing, by the admirable pictorial grouping and the high perspective point, the clearness of composition despite the number of diminutive figures, the parallel folds of fluttering drapery, and the broad treatment of the curling hair in the forcible portrait busts. All these are traits we find only in Bertoldo's reliefs, and if they seem more specially pronounced in the medals authentically his, the miniature-like scale of the Medici medals must be taken into account.

But there are other evidences to support this result of our *Stilkritik*. That Antonio Pollaiuolo, whose design for the Forteguerri tomb Lorenzo had rejected in favour of Verrocchio's, should in that very same year, 1477, have been entrusted with the casting of a medal to commemorate so notable an event in the history of the Medici is scarcely probable, apart from the fact that, as we shall presently see, Pollaiuolo appears never to have tried his hand as a medallist. It would seem on the face of it more likely that Bertoldo, Lorenzo's intimate friend and adviser in matters of art, the man already famed as a medallist, should have received the commission. As it happens, too, we have documentary evidence concerning medals executed by Bertoldo for Lorenzo in the year of the Pazzi conspiracy. Andrea Guazzalotti, clerk to the Ecclesiastical Courts and a Canon in Prato, something of a medallist himself, and evidently an expert caster, writes on September 11, 1478, to Lorenzo Magnifico that he is sending 'four medals cast by his own hand from a medal (*prima impronta*) provided by Bertoldo.' That these could not have been four specimens of the Mahomed medal, as Friedländer assumes, is evident from the date of that medal, which Friedländer himself puts at 1481. How much more natural that it should refer

MEDALS BY BERTOLDO

MEDAL COMMEMORATING THE PAZZI CONSPIRACY

MEDAL OF SULTAN MAHOMED II

MEDAL OF ALFONSO OF ARAGON

MICHELANGELO
GIOVANNINO
Museum, Berlin

to the medal commemorating Lorenzo's preservation, an event which had occurred a few months previously, and to which the remark in Guazzalotti's letter, 'è cosa immortale,' no doubt alludes. Nor is the suggestion from another quarter that the words in the letter, 'quatro medaglie le quali o' trayetate,' apply to specimens of four different medals by Bertoldo any better grounded. For, as a rule, the artist will have as many specimens of his wax model as he requires cast at one time. Moreover, this applies even more to earlier times than the present, because then the personal interest in medals was far greater than the artistic. Therefore Guazzalotti had obviously undertaken, as a favour to his friend Bertoldo, to cast this commemorative medal and send four picked specimens direct to Lorenzo.

Armand, in the first edition of his book, included in Pollaiuolo's works a rare medal for Antonio Gratiadei, an attribution which he afterwards revoked in consequence of Friedländer's doubts on the subject, who discusses this medal and another, rather different, one for the same man in conjunction with those he assigns to Pollaiuolo. Of these two he observes: 'They may, too, have been cast from models of Pollaiuolo's or Bertoldo's by some pupil in Germany or Flanders.' But the technique of the reverse of this medal leaves absolutely no doubt as to its authorship by the modeller of the Pazzi medal, while design and conception accord so completely with the reverses of the Mahomed and the Letitia Sanuto medals as to settle the question definitely for Bertoldo.

Another medal, again, by its close correspondence with those described above, must be claimed for Bertoldo. This is the medal for Alfonso of Aragon, Duke of Calabria, bearing on the reverse type an allegorical rendering of his victory over the Florentines at Monte Imperiale (Poggibonsi) on September 7, 1479 (Plate LXXX.). Like the same Prince's medal commemorating the conquest of Otranto, this one has been attributed to Guazzalotti, but it differs essentially from the jejune style of that dilettante. The profile portrait in low relief of the young Prince is finely characterised and soft in contour, very different from Guazzalotti's portrait medals. But the reverse type is decisive for Bertoldo, exhibiting all the familiar traits of his medals: the leaning to the antique in the composition, the style of figure, the sketchy pictorial treatment of the design. Though to us it may appear strange that an artist so closely connected with the court of the Medici should have executed

a medal for an enemy, and to commemorate his victory over the Florentines (which would also apply to Guazzalotti), the argument has little weight for those days. As Lorenzo repaired to Naples immediately after the defeat at Monte Imperiale and peace was concluded with Alfonso in Florence, the medal was probably meant to celebrate the event. The medals of Filippo de' Medici and of Mahomed were undoubtedly produced at Lorenzo's instigation, who maintained particularly friendly relations with the 'Grand Turk.'

Another reason for referring these medals to a common source is the similarity in the lettering. Not only is the shape of the letters the same, but their distribution and the intervals between the words. Letters of unusual formation also occur in different medals. For instance, in the signature of the Mahomed medal Bertoldo writes his name with a small 'b,' and in the legend on the reverse of the Gratiadei medal there appears a similarly formed 'b' in among the capitals and again in the inscription round the head of the Mahomed (MAHVMbET).

The reverse type of the Mahomed, of the Letitia Sanuto and of the unknown medal (preserved as a plaquette in the Berlin Museum and in the Dreyfus Collection in Paris), represents, like the reverse of the Gratiadei medal, a triumphal car. The first three compositions are not very difficult to decipher, and therefore are usually described as identical, though this is not strictly the case. The design on the reverse of the Mahomed medal is certainly quite intelligible, especially as some of the figures have explanatory superscriptions. The Sultan as victor stands upon the triumphal car, a statuette, probably a Victory, in his uplifted hand, and holding in his right a rope which binds three nude female figures, representing, according to accompanying inscriptions, the conquered territories of Greece, Trebizond, and Asia. The car is drawn by a pair of horses led by a nude helmeted warrior, who bears in his left hand a spear on which is a cuirass; below are two reclining figures, a nude male figure with a trident and a female with a cornucopia. These two obviously represent Earth and Ocean, and the leader of the horses, Mars.

On the reverse of the Letitia Sanuto medal we have an almost identical triumphal car likewise festooned with a garland. The two unicorns drawing the car characterise the seated female figure in fluttering drapery as 'Pudicitia.' Before her stands Amor (?),

apparently in supplication; another female figure leads the animals, while a third flies towards Chastity, to crown her. A small nude genius helps to lead the unicorns, another pushes behind the car, very similar to the bacchanal *putti* in the Bargello. In the lower part of the design two genii crouch holding a tablet bearing the inscription: DECVS. M. V. (*matronarum veneziarum*?).

The reverse already mentioned, belonging to an unknown medal and preserved to us in the form of a plaquette, exhibits a similar design. Aloft on a triumphal car drawn by two galloping horses over stony ground a female figure sits enthroned. Before her kneels a nude male figure bound on an altar round which flames leap up, vigorously fanned by a cupid kneeling on the floor of the car. In front of the horses, on which two cupids stand as drivers, runs a nude male figure waving his garments. Below this design are the attributes of Love—quiver, bow, arrows, and wings, of which he seems to have been deprived. Several of the figures on the reverse of the Letitia medal were not easy to decipher, partly on account of careless modelling and rough casting, but this composition presents far more difficulties, despite the careful chasing by the artist, who cast it after Bertoldo's model. The catalogue of the Berlin collection of plaquettes describes it, like the reverse of the Letitia medal, as a 'Triumph of Chastity,' an interpretation given by Semrau; the youth bound to the altar is taken to be Eros deprived of his weapons and made ready for death. But to me the exact opposite seems more probable; surely the winged genius fanning the flames is intended for Love, the more so that the seated female figure cannot possibly be a Pudicitia, but rather, from the vase she holds in her lap and the lower part of some animal's leg in her right hand, characterised as a Bacchic figure (or a Venus?). The runner, too, is modelled on an antique figure of the Bacchic circle. The youth on the sacrificial altar (he is bearded seemingly) is obviously undergoing punishment for rejecting love.

The interpretation of the triumph on the reverse of the Gratiadei medal presents still greater difficulties. Friedländer dismisses it briefly as a 'crowded design; Mercury surrounded by numerous figures on a triumphal car drawn by a lion.' Armand, too, gives up the puzzle, only suggesting that the figure confronting the lion is a cupid. Thanks to the extreme precision of the modelling, and despite the fact that the medal is not even chased, I think that most

of the tiny figures may be recognised. The nude male figure raised high above the rest on a pedestal is of course Mercury, from his winged cap and the Caduceus in his hand. The trumpet in his right hand into which he blows is an addition difficult to conceive of in an antique relief, but the Renaissance was not so particular in her treatment of mythology. The nine youthful female figures with beautiful fluttering drapery, joining hands in a dance round Mercury, reveal themselves by their number as the Muses. At the back of the car stands a nude male figure in a cap or helmet and carrying a cuirass on a staff in his left hand, a figure corresponding in every way to the one preceding the car on the Mahomed medal and very possibly a Mars. The nude male figure crouching on the very front of the car is difficult to interpret,—the broad shoulders would lead one to take it for a Hercules were it not so conspicuously small. There can be no doubt, however, about the two figures hovering above the scene: the youth driving his steeds up into the heavens can only be Helios, and the figure with the crescent moon in her hand Selene. The car is drawn by a single lion guided by a female figure riding on his back and holding a torch in the left hand. The lion rears against a helmeted man who confronts him. Above him in the air is an object shaped somewhat like a double eagle: below the car the legend VOLENTEM DVCVNT · NOLENTEM TRAHUNT. This elaborate allegory is evidently meant for a flattering illustration of the effects produced by the Imperial orator, who by the aid of the Muses and of Mercury's persuasive tongue can 'lead the willing and drag the unwilling' along with him.

In connection with these medals I draw attention to a number of plaquettes of various sizes which, in spite of their marked similarity to Bertoldo's works, I cannot conscientiously attribute with certainty to him. These comprise two fair-sized bronze reliefs, one, square, representing the 'Training of Cupid'[1] (a copy in the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the Archæological Museum in Venice); the other, round, with 'Venus, Cupid, and Vulcan,' of which there is a plaster copy at Stefano Bardini's in Florence. Then there is a suite of small round plaques (eight or nine), mostly representing the

[1] In a picture by Carpaccio—one of the S. Ursula cycle—a free rendering of this relief is introduced into the background as a large marble relief on a house. The companion to it is not, as might be supposed, a copy of a lost pendant to the bronze relief, but obviously, from the composition and style of figure, Carpaccio's own design.

Orpheus legend—attributed to a particular artist known as the artist 'of the Orpheus Story'—and a few other plaquettes of kindred style. The low relief, the slender nude figures, the style of composition, the high perspective point all show strong affinity with the reverses of the Bertoldo medals I have described.

A solution to the intricate problem set us in Bertoldo's medals, plaquettes, and bronze figurines, and in their connection to the persons portrayed, excepting, of course, members of the Medici family, can only be sought in history and literature of the period. I have only offered suggestions; a clear understanding could only be arrived at through a thorough knowledge of the history of the persons portrayed, of the attitude of the Humanists towards classical literature, and particularly an intimate knowledge of the literary productions of Lorenzo and his circle. For most of Bertoldo's works reveal not only the prevalent taste of the period for classic subjects, but the desire to inform them with the true spirit of the antique; consequently that they were designed under the influence of the great Humanists of his day, chief among whom was his patron, Lorenzo the Magnificent. Studying Bertoldo's works, we at once see the justice of Bartolommeo Dei's words, already quoted, written at the artist's death: 'In company with the Magnifico Lorenzo he ever accomplished admirable things.' Bertoldo's chief significance lies in the fact that in carrying out Lorenzo's artistic schemes he had all the classical and liberal attainments of that enlightened Prince to assist him; and to examine and seek to elucidate the artist's activity from this side, and to define his position clearly between Donatello and Michelangelo, proving by his works what he owed to the one and could offer to the other, would be a task productive of the most valuable results for the history of the art of the Renaissance.

X

SOME YOUTHFUL WORKS BY MICHELANGELO AND THEIR RELATION TO HIS TEACHERS AND PREDECESSORS

WHEN works never before mentioned in that connection are ascribed to so extraordinary a genius as Michelangelo, in whose lifetime already every scrap of evidence regarding his productions was eagerly collected by his pupils, the utmost caution should naturally be observed before accepting such attribution. Nevertheless, they have in several instances been accepted almost without discussion; witness the so-called 'Apollo' in the Museo Nazionale in Florence, the 'Apollo' of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the 'Crouching Boy' of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, none of which can offer any proof of authenticity. The 'Giovannino,' too, of the Berlin Museum (Plate LXXXI.), with the unfinished pictures of the 'Entombment' and the 'Manchester Madonna' in the National Gallery, so long disputed, have now been added; for Heinrich Wölfflin remains alone in his repeated protest against these works being claimed for Michelangelo's. The two pictures in the National Gallery, long regarded with suspicion in conservative England on account of their lack of pedigree, are now accepted as genuine works of the youthful Michelangelo; while Wölfflin's case against the 'Giovannino,' energetically refuted by Wilhelm Hencke and Josef Strzygowski, has been entirely disregarded by Karl Justi and Adolf Hildebrand in their discussions of the statue. But the statue itself bears such eloquent testimony to the hand of the great sculptor that I need add nothing more to what I have already said of the 'Giovannino,'[1] especially as Wilhelm Hencke in his *Early Works of Michelangelo* (1891) has, with his wonted spirit and lucidity, most convincingly refuted Wölfflin's objections and pointed out the distinctively Michelangelesque character of the

[1] *Jahrbuch der K. Preuss. Kunstsamml.*, 1881, p. 72 *et seq.*

figure.[1] However, I cannot allow Wölfflin's latest dictum to pass unchallenged, which, were it true, would conclusively prove his case against Michelangelo. He thinks he has found the true sculptor of the 'Giovannino' in Girolamo Santacroce,[2] a Neapolitan artist who died young, and in whose figure of the 'Baptist' on the altar of Montoliveto in Naples Wölfflin discovers the closest analogy to our statue.

Wölfflin's plan of bringing forward analogous works of art to compare them with the 'Giovannino' appears to me so good that I shall follow in his footsteps—though with a very different goal in view—persuaded that the results will be directly contrary to his. For it is just by comparing it with similar sculptures by other masters of the same period that the 'Giovannino' statue stands forth more and more plainly as the work of Michelangelo.

What Wölfflin objects to most in our 'Giovannino' as foreign to Michelangelo and altogether an anachronism is the '*gracile*' character of the figure. Hencke has already clearly shown the fallacy of this opinion in regard to Michelangelo's early works. To his remarks I would like to add that, taking the difference of age into consideration, the Christ of the 'Pietà' in St. Peter's deserves the attribute '*gracile*' to almost the same degree as the 'Giovannino' produced but a year or two before. And the same applies to the nude young male figure in the tondo picture of the 'Holy Family,' not to speak of the unfinished pictures in the National Gallery, seeing that Wölfflin still refuses to acknowledge them as Michelangelo's. But to prove that this slender and graceful character was by no means unusual in Florence during the transition from the Quattro to the Cinquecento, let me point out the works of an artist which still appear from time to time in the art commerce of Florence. As a rule they represent the youthful Baptist, are modelled in clay and not tinted according to nature, but in imitation of marble or bronze. Wölfflin is quite right in saying that the Baptist's age, just between boy and man, and his being seated, are traits of the Cinquecento; but in the position of the legs, the more typical forms, especially of the head, and the evident striving after beauty we see the dawning tendencies of a new period, while in the attitude and modelling as well as in the expression the influence of the youngest masters

[1] *Preussische Jahrbücher*, LXVIII., p. 44 *et seq.*

[2] Wölfflin, *Die Klassische Kunst*, p. 47.

of the Quattrocento, more particularly Benedetto da Maiano, is most apparent. The formation of the rock, too, on which the Baptist sits resembles closely Michelangelo's treatment of the ground in his early marble sculptures. Without Michelangelo, and more particularly without the 'Giovannino,' these clay statues are not imaginable, and yet what a gulf between the two artists!

That our 'Giovannino' is not the work of an imitator of Michelangelo is very clearly demonstrated by an interesting marble statue of the Baptist, slightly over life size, promoted a few years ago from the storehouse of the Museo Nazionale to the court of the Bargello.[1]

Though youthful, the 'St. John' is somewhat older than our 'Giovannino' and, his right knee slightly flexed, half kneels on a boulder rising out of rocky ground. By every detail of pose and movement the artist endeavours to make his figure interesting, and the methods he adopts are all taken from Michelangelo. The action of the different parts of the body are made as various as possible, so that they form a zigzag line: the right leg is hidden behind the rock, the left advanced and bent, the right arm is flexed and raised, the left hangs limp along the body; both hands with large widespread fingers grasp the drapery: the joints are emphasised, as are the big bones and prominent muscles. But as the muscular development seems exaggerated for the age of the person represented, so the pose is strained, and the action, particularly of the hands, without sufficient motive; the whole attitude, in fact, is more appropriate to a 'St. Jerome' than a youthful 'Baptist,' for whom also the mouth, open in the act of crying, is unintelligible, while in the 'Giovannino' every movement, every detail, fits the design. Similarly, in the treatment of all the details the latter far surpasses the kneeling 'St. John' of the Bargello, despite the fact that it too would certainly appear to be modelled on the 'Giovannino'; you need only compare the arrangement and general treatment of the ground, the modelling of the goatskin fastened (quite needlessly) with a clumsy rope instead of the perfectly appropriate, graceful, and skilfully arranged band of our statue. By his very efforts to copy his methods as closely

[1] Another figure of a youth showing still more strongly the influence of the 'Giovannino' is to be found among the marble statues which surround the upper pond (with the Hercules fountain) in the Boboli Gardens in Florence. It shows in its mannerism almost more strongly the beauties of its original.

as possible, the painstaking artist—certainly a contemporary—only makes the distance between him and Michelangelo the more apparent, and adds one more proof in favour of the authenticity of the Berlin statue. As regards the 'Giovannino,' our contention gains some support from the fact that Michelangelo did actually execute a marble figure of this kind on his return from Bologna, but we have not even so much to guide us in respect of two small unfinished marble sculptures which I would desire to place among the youthful works of the master. One of these we owe to the discriminating taste of the late Karl Eduard von Liphart, whose grandson, R. von Liphart, has it now in his collection at Rathshof near Dorpat. This is an oval marble relief representing 'Apollo and Marsyas.' In the early eighties Herr von Liphart[1] happened to notice a small marble relief let into the side-wall of a house on the Lung' Arno delle Grazie in Florence which, on closer inspection, seemed to him no less than a work of Michelangelo's. In his disinterested way he at once communicated his idea to the unsuspecting house owner, who promptly repaid the kindness by refusing him admittance to the garden whence the relief could be better inspected. So I, too, had to content myself with viewing it at a respectful distance through iron gates and between thick shrubs till a year or two ago, when Liphart's grandson and sole heir laid the original before me in Berlin. He had had the fortunate idea of purchasing the marble as a memento of his revered grandfather, and adding it to the art collection of the family seat at Rathshof.

The relief is of Carrara marble, and measures 0·40 m.

[1] K. E. von Liphart, the eminent connoisseur and art critic, died in February 1891 at the age of eighty-three in Florence, where he had lived for many years. He was a man who, through his personality alone, has profoundly influenced the course of latter-day German art. His very original home in Florence, where he had established himself many years ago, overlooked the Boboli gardens at one side and commanded a view of the Torrigiani gardens on the other. Among the wilderness of photographs, engravings, casts, and books which covered the walls, tables, and even the floor, but through whose apparent confusion the owner could find his way perfectly in the prevailing semi-darkness, there were a few paintings and pieces of sculpture. These were, however, without exception gifts from his royal patroness, the Grand-Duchess Marie Nicholajevna. For, notwithstanding that from his earliest youth Liphart had been an indefatigable collector of art-reproductions of every description, he had persistently refrained from buying the originals, fearing, doubtless, that with his passion for collecting he would thus overstep his means. Hence, when in one of the last years of his life he made this happy find on one of those shorter tours of discovery in Florence to which increasing age restricted him, he resisted the temptation to acquire the work, though he might have done so for a trifling sum.

in height by about 0·30 m. in width. The oval is damaged and worn away on the right side. The sculpture is unfinished; some parts more, some less; here and there rough corrections have been made on almost finished places, particularly on the lower part of the body of the Marsyas and the legs of the Apollo. The face of the Apollo is unfortunately mutilated by the accidental or wilful breakage of the nose and lips.

The scene represented is the competition between Apollo and Marsyas, copied almost exactly from the well-known antique cameo in the possession of the Medici,[1] of which the Renaissance has handed down to us a number of plaquettes and reproductions of various size.

The first thing that strikes one in the Liphart relief is the extreme want of skill in the handling, and the faultiness of proportion and anatomy. These faults are so conspicuous as to point undoubtedly to the hand of a beginner. Therefore, when Liphart named Michelangelo as the sculptor of this relief, he was not thinking of the finished artist, not even of the youth, but of the boy Michelangelo, who, under Bertoldo's guidance, studied and copied the antique in the gardens of Lorenzo de' Medici. As a matter of fact there are various reasons for claiming this relief as the earliest piece of work by Michelangelo extant. To be sure it lacks any sort of authentication: neither Condivi nor Vasari mention a word of Michelangelo having ever copied the Medici cameo; nor are there any documentary evidences regarding the relief. Yet there can be no question that the earliest authenticated works —the 'Madonna of the Steps' and the 'Battle of the Centaurs'— were preceded by other similar essays in which the lad gained that mastery over his materials and the knowledge of anatomy exhibited already to such an extraordinary degree in those two reliefs. It would be unfair, therefore, to deny Michelangelo's authorship simply because of the lack of outside evidence; on the other hand the work must bear the marks of its identity all the more plainly that he who runs may read.

[1] The statement that this cameo passed from the possession of the Medici to the Museum in Naples lacks confirmation. For the specimen at Naples is without the setting and inscription executed and accurately described by Ghiberti, and reproduced in one of the plaquettes (No. 655 of the Berlin Collection). Cf. Molinier (*Les Plaquettes*, i. p. 4), whereas Müntz (*La Renaissance*, p. 257) maintains the authenticity and identity of the Naples cameo.

The faults of this relief, which would be conspicuous even in the most mediocre of artists, notably in the torso of the Marsyas and the treatment of the left leg of the Apollo, demonstrate beyond a doubt that it must have been among the earliest attempts of the fourteen-year-old boy who had just entered Bertoldo's class. Another reason lies in the fact of its being a direct copy of an antique, a thing the independent artist would never have done, but which would be the most natural proceeding for a student, especially under Bertoldo. But the hand of the future genius is already discernible in certain peculiarities even in this first unskilled effort.

To begin with, the technique is such as we know in the authenticated youthful works, which Michelangelo partially retained throughout his whole career. The use of the drills on the contours of the body, the direction of the chisel in regular parallel strokes, the sketchy treatment of the tree-trunk which we see in this 'Marsyas' relief are characteristic marks of all Michelangelo's marble works, whereas we find them with no other artist of either the fifteenth or sixteenth century. Note, too, the peculiar treatment of the hair covering the head like a thick cap, a distinctive feature in Michelangelo's early works and most marked in the 'Battle of the Centaurs.'

Even the points in which the 'Marsyas' relief diverges from the antique original speak for the justice of our attribution. Extremely significant is the stronger twist he gives to the torso of the principal figure by bringing the left hip and shoulder further forward and turning the head more towards Marsyas over the right shoulder, thus accentuating, too, the contrast between the position of the leg supporting the body and the other. That these were intentional deviations from the original model is proved by the other alterations inevitably consequent. Thus the lyre, which the Apollo in the cameo holds up in his hand, rests here on the very prominent left hip. Despite the childish inexperience of the technique these alterations are very significant of the budding genius, who only lacks the mechanical facility to express his intentions.

Characteristic, too, of Michelangelo's inborn love of the large and simple in design is the simplification of the composition as compared with the original. All possible detail is omitted, even the

drapery (except an end over the right leg of the Marsyas), and the little kneeling satyr at the feet of the Apollo (though evidently introduced at first) must have been removed by the artist himself when going over the relief a second time. By these comparatively slight alterations the young sculptor has changed the Apollo into a figure strikingly in accordance with his independent creations. And this applies more especially to the 'David,' of whom the Apollo in the Liphart relief is a distinct, though primitive, herald, while the full contours give promise of the 'Bacchus.' Worthy of remark, too, is the influence of the close study of this cameo on the later productions of the sculptor. That group of Apollo with the little satyr at his side, though Michelangelo removed it from his copy, must yet have been in his mind, not only when he restored the antique 'Bacchus' of the Uffizi, but in the composition of his own 'Bacchus' in the Bargello. In the attitude and diminutive figure of the satyr and the position of the two figures to one another, both these groups show the most conspicuous affinity to the group on the cameo.

Thus the importance of this small relief, almost repellently uncouth at the first glance, lies not only in the fact that in it we have the first boyish efforts of the greatest artist of post-antique times, but it proves how early Michelangelo's unique style began to show itself, and, on the other hand, how lasting was the influence of his youthful impressions on the works of his later years.

A small marble 'Apollo with a Violin' (Plate LXXXII.) in the Berlin Museum shows a great advance, and yet stands in direct relationship to the Apollo and Marsyas relief. I introduced this figure (presented to our collection in 1898) to the public,[1] with a letter from the sculptor Adolf Hildebrand, which I quote here:—

'This figure, I take it, is not a work of Michelangelo's actual youth, but rather of middle date (though before the Sixtine ceiling), when his absorbing problem lay in the planning of the composition. This once successfully achieved, all is done that makes the work a thing of life, no further working up can add to that. He had no desire to finish a work of this kind—he had solved his problem, that was all he cared about. He had not yet arrived at this clear consciousness in the 'Giovannino' and the 'Bacchus.' With them the whole interest still lies in the forms as such, in attitude and gesture, and these are not yet fitted to one compact whole. This 'Apollo' is an admirable exposition of

[1] *Jahrbuch der Kgl. Pr. Kunstsammlungen*, 1901, p. 33 *et seq.*

MICHELANGELO

APOLLO WITH VIOLIN

Museum, Berlin

Alinari

MICHELANGELO

BATTLE OF THE CENTAURS AND LAPITHÆ

Casa Buonarroti, Florence

the methods for the actual cutting out of the stone, and most interesting to compare with the later 'Apollo' of the Bargello, where his conception went a step further, and we see the transition from one view to another, whereas here the front view is all-important. Thus this 'Apollo' represents a distinct stage in the succession of the artist's problems. There was no question of the production of a statue as such—it was merely a means towards a definite end.'

The statuette is in Carrara marble, and measures with the base 78·5 cm. The head and one shoulder were broken off at one time and the fracture not quite perfectly put together again; besides this, small pieces on the chin and nose have been broken off and filled in. The figure came from the Villa Borghese, where it had been stowed away for long, and was sold with the other contents in 1895 or 1896.

The statuette is nearest to the 'David' in pose, and particularly in the attitude of the arms; the head being turned over the other shoulder of course changes the supporting leg. The treatment and the similar size recall very strongly the early relief of the Centaurs, but this figure, as regards its adaptation to space and general modelling, is greatly in advance of the figures of the relief. The artist's method of using the drill is also a proof that the work was not produced later than the beginning of the Cinquecento.

In youthful works such as these we find echoes of earlier masters, Michelangelo's forerunners. Any one who denies this will of course use such points as further argument against the authenticity of the works in question. But is it really true that Michelangelo stepped into the art world at the end of the Quattrocento unassisted, the pupil of no school, fully equipped like Minerva from the head of Jove? Is it true that 'the years he spent under Ghirlandaio left no trace upon him,' and that 'it would be difficult to divine his master (Bertoldo) in his early sculptures,' as Wölfflin asserts?

Though Michelangelo 'sopra gli altri com' aguila vola,' he took his flight from the earth; and as regards his art, he is the son of his times, the pupil of his masters. This his boyish works betray unmistakably, but it can be traced in the productions of his more advanced youth. Where this is particularly marked, as in the unfinished London pictures, Wölfflin will not acknowledge them

as his, therefore we must not take these works to support our argument. However, the acknowledged works show such traits in abundance if one only takes the trouble to look for them. The influence of another artist on the youthful Michelangelo is most plainly manifest in a marble statuette of 'S. Petronio,' executed during his stay in Bologna when he was nineteen. And that the artist in question was Jacopo della Quercia is evident from a glance at the well-known statue by him over the main door of the Church of S. Petronio. The mighty forms and dramatic style of the Sienese sculptor, born just a century before Michelangelo, so particularly conspicuous in the reliefs of the framework of this doorway, had a marked influence on the development of the young artist, and the impressions of those years are acknowledged to be more indelible than any others. Is it not equally likely that Michelangelo should have received similar impressions from his instructors and his predecessors in Florence among whose works he grew up?

The earliest acknowledged works of Michelangelo, which display his original style in a high degree though he was only sixteen or seventeen when he produced them, are the two marble reliefs in the Museo Buonarroti: the 'Battle of the Centaurs and Lapithae' and the 'Madonna of the Steps.' The affinity of the 'Battle of the Centaurs' (Plate LXXXIII.) to Bertoldo's 'Battle of the Horsemen' (cf. Plate LXXIV.) is unmistakable. The youthful Michelangelo must have seen it daily among the art treasures of the Medici Collection, where he studied under Bertoldo: the assumption that this may have influenced him in his choice of subject is therefore not so very far fetched. But more than this has never been claimed—the differences (and to the advantage of the pupil) are too apparent. Yet a careful comparison of the two reliefs will bring to light certain striking resemblances which witness to the influence of the older artist on the young one. The filling out of the whole space to the very edge with figures, the grouping in rows above and behind one another, the emphasis on the middle of the composition by the prominence of the hero, the standing figures at the corners as pillars to close up the sides—these are no casual similarities. Nor has the pupil followed the master's plan of 'collecting single figures out of antique models'; he had the teacher's finished work always before him, and this offered him

notable suggestions which were not to be found in the antiques. Here, as in so many of his small bronzes, Bertoldo displays such diversity of movement and grouping, such endless variety in the attitude of each figure and its component parts as we find in no other artist of the Quattrocento but Leonardo. In the turmoil of the combat he has sought to reproduce the utmost diversity of attitude, although the victorious rush of the Greeks, carrying the Trojans along with them, forces the stream of movement inevitably from one side to the other. Here a foe reaches back from his flying steed to aim a crushing blow at his pursuer; there another gallops forward to meet the advancing charge, while amongst the riders and across the bodies of fallen or slain horses the warriors fight on foot, exhibiting every conceivable variety of foreshortening and action. There is hardly a figure that does not show the most contrasting and often violent twist of upper and lower part, head and torso, arms and legs. Only at the corners of the composition does the eye obtain some relief from this 'coil' in the erect and reposeful 'Victories' and the beautiful figures slightly to one side of them which Wickhoff designates as 'Hector' and 'Helen.' It is true that neither the 'Victories' nor the two writhing captives on whom they set their feet could furnish Michelangelo with models for his figures on the Giuliano tomb, but from the daily study of such works of his master's he unconsciously absorbed suggestions which are evident in much later works than his 'Battle of the Centaurs.' But more distinctly than in this over-crowded, restless composition, and in the furious movements of these struggling groups, one notices in Bertoldo's single figures that fondness for contrasting flexure which reminds one of his more famous pupil by whom, however, it was finally developed into the actual *contraposte*. A fine example of this—to name but one among several similar figures—is the previously mentioned 'Bellerophon and Pegasus' in the Vienna Hof-museum, the most important among these smaller bronzes (Plate LXXV.). Although in this case too the artist obviously follows the antique, the pose is entirely modern. Arrested in full career by the unruly steed, the naked youth leans hard back and prepares with his right hand to strike the horse which he holds by the mouth with his left. The position of the legs from knee to ankle reveals the rapidity of the movement so suddenly arrested, while the shoulders are thrown violently back to resist the fierce strength of the animal.

The lower part of the youth's body is turned towards the horse behind him, whereas the chest is presented almost *en face* and the uplifted head and both arms are in profile. The finest figure in Michelangelo's 'Battle of the Centaurs' is so closely akin to this 'Bellerophon' that we cannot but think it to be directly inspired by his master's work. Such absolutely unmistakable models as this are not to be found in the 'Battle' relief.

There are other bronze statuettes of Bertoldo's in which this opposition between the different parts of the figure is even more conspicuous. The 'St. Jerome' in the Berlin Collection kneels to the left but turns head and shoulders to the right, holding high a crucifix in the left hand, while in the right he grasps the stone which he is in the act of hurling at his own breast. Conception and execution are quite in the manner of the young Michelangelo; indeed it exceeds his early works in the exaggerated contrast of movement running from head to neck, thence to the chest, the hips, and finally to the lower limbs, and also because the figure, especially in the position of the neck, arms, legs, and head is no longer presented in the plane but has a marked tendency towards depth. Still more modern and in the spirit of the *haute Renaissance* and also more noteworthy from the admirable expression of sentiment in the whole pose of the figure is another bronze statuette in the Berlin Collection, the so-called 'Suppliant' (cf. Plate LXXVII.). Here the lines are not so sharply broken, the treatment of depth is more correct, and the handling of the *contraposte* more assured through the raising of the right foot and the disposition of the arms. In the well-known bronze 'Arion' of the Bargello this striving after diversity of movement seems forced almost to the point of affectation. The nude youth playing the violin throws his head back as he sings and points the left foot to begin the dance. There is no mistaking an echo of this 'tripping' in the unsteady motion of Michelangelo's 'Bacchus.' The pose of the 'Hercules' statuette in the Berlin Collection is simpler. Firmly supported on the right leg, the left hand with the lion skin planted on the hip, the slightly raised head turned to right and gazing fixedly towards the foe while, as the reflex action of his thoughts, the hanging right hand closes mechanically round the knotted club, the figure seems so closely allied both in pose and sentiment to Michelangelo's 'David,' that in the creation of the latter work it would be

impossible to deny Michelangelo's recollection of this production of his teacher.

For the 'Madonna of the Steps' (Plate XXIV.), probably produced before the 'Battle of the Centaurs,' there is no known work of Bertoldo's which could afford a direct model, though his small bronze panel of the Madonna in the Louvre exhibits the same pictorial low relief, and several traits very unusual to the Quattrocento, though extremely characteristic afterwards of Michelangelo. It is quite possible, though we have no proof of it, that there may have been some other Madonna composition of Bertoldo's which stood much closer to the relief in question. However, among the works of Bertoldo's predecessors, more especially of his master Donatello,[1] we have various Madonna reliefs, to which Michelangelo's exhibits the closest analogy. I have already referred to this in the discussion of Desiderio's small bas-relief of the Madonna in the possession of M. Gustave Dreyfus in Paris (cf. pp. 114 *et seq.*). It was just because it bore so unmistakably the stamp of Michelangelo that Wölfflin first declared it to be an imitation of the 'Madonna of the Steps,' and later on a forgery. Neither assertion holds good, seeing that the Dreyfus relief can be traced by its various repetitions down to the middle of the Quattrocento. The features that seem to point to the Cinquecento—the semi-ideal costume, the full folds, the loose grasp of the widespread fingers in the drapery, the grouping and attitude of the figures, etc.—prove on closer inspection to be characteristic already in the Early Renaissance, particularly of Donatello and his immediate following; not, of course, to the extent of an individually typical manner, but still distinctly present in one or the other form. Other traits, such as the large classical profile of the Virgin, her abstracted gaze, the wide embroidered borders of the robe, the fillet and so forth, are as invariably and intentionally employed by Donatello as by Michelangelo. And not by Donatello alone, but by every one of the great masters who with

[1] A small statue hitherto unnoticed, although its authenticity is attested, points to the influence of Donatello: the 'S. Proculo' at the back of the marble shrine of S. Domenico in Bologna. Has this figure only recently been restored to its place? It was described as missing and replaced by a later statuette. Type, pose, drapery, treatment of the hair, all reveal the hand of Michelangelo, though considerably behind the technique of the 'Kneeling Angel' and the 'S. Petronio.' In the disposition of the mantle the little figure recalls Donatello's 'S. George' in Orsanmichele: the rest of the costume, especially the short robe, makes it akin to the 'David' of the Casa Martelli.

him ushered in the Renaissance: Ghiberti, Masaccio, Luca della Robbia, Quercia, who in their broad and noble style, their desire for the ideal in form and drapery, their instinct for the effective dramatic moment in the composition, in nobility and pathos of conception often stand nearer to the Late Renaissance than do their successors in the Quattrocento. In the works of the great masters of the Early Renaissance even Michelangelo could find much that appealed to his own artistic instincts; he studied them, therefore, earnestly during his youth and turned them to account. It was no mere bon-mot of his contemporary Vincenzio Borghini to say:

'Η Δωνατος Βοναρρωτιζει
'Η Βοναρρωτος Δωνατιζει

it shows how clearly the Cinquecento recognised the relationship between the two great masters and loved to place them side by side.

GIOVANNI DELLA ROBBIA

PIETÀ

Museum, Berlin

Brogi

GIOVANNI DELLA ROBBIA

PIETÀ

Museo Nazionale, Florence

XI

ON SOME PIETÀ GROUPS BY GIOVANNI DELLA ROBBIA AND THE INFLUENCE OF SAVONAROLA ON FLORENTINE ART

AMONG the additions to the Berlin Museum of the year 1887 was a large clay group of the 'Dead Christ mourned by the Virgin, St. John, and the Magdalen' (Plate LXXXIV.). At the first glance, any one at all familiar with Italian art will feel he has seen many similar works. This impression can hardly have been obtained from the few kindred 'Pietà' groups in tinted terra-cotta still extant, for they are nearly all either in unfrequented corners of Florence or in that huge storehouse, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and have therefore received but little attention hitherto. But Florentine Art of the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century has a number of sculptures and paintings to show, which, in conception and treatment, are closely akin to these terra-cotta groups, amongst them such well-known works as Perugino's 'Pietà' in the Accademia at Florence, and the same subject by Fra Bartolommeo in the Pitti Palace.

A more careful examination of the works reveals their intimate connection with one another, leading back to a common source of inspiration; they afford, as I think, a not unimportant insight into one of the most remarkable phases in the development of Florentine Art.

To begin with our Berlin group—the body of the dead Christ lies stretched at full length across the knees of the Mother, who with folded hands gazes down upon him in speechless grief; St. John kneels, supporting the nobly modelled head of the Saviour, on whom his tearful eyes are bent; while on the other side of the Virgin the Magdalen kneels, her grief-stricken gaze fixed on the face of her dead Redeemer, and mechanically stretches out her left hand to support his feet. The figures are in tinted terra-cotta, the execution,

except at the back, extremely careful and finished; the colouring is in oils over an unusually thin coat of plaster, and though original, is not particularly good nor well laid on, a circumstance often observed in the tinted clay or plaster sculptures of this period, from which one is apt to mistake this original painting for a later addition or a bad restoration. The neglect of the back shows that the group were placed against a wall—on an altar or in a lunette or a niche. It was last in a villa in the neighbourhood of Florence, having come there from the Convento delle Capuccine on the closing of the monasteries by Napoleon. No record remained of the name of the artist. In the beautiful, reposeful lines, in the noble figures, the classical folds of the drapery, the restrained expression of grief—combined, however, with a certain coldness, a superficiality and lack of spontaneity in the emotion, and an almost painful accuracy in execution, this work is marked by features so destinctive that others of a like nature by the same artist would be readily recognised. And, indeed, there exist several kindred groups representing this subject, some still in Florence, others that were originally obtained there.

Two of these groups are in Cronaca's pretty little church (formerly S. Francesco dell' Osservanza) below San Miniato. The larger group of the two is in the lunette over the inner door of the left-hand nave, and represents the 'Entombment.' Eight figures almost in the round and little under life size are skilfully grouped round the sarcophagus and brought within the compass of the semicircular niche, the heads projecting beyond its flat rim. In the middle, above the arch, sit two naked *putti* on either side of a high vase. The composition most obviously follows one or other of Donatello's several 'Entombments,' but in its classical, somewhat rigid repose, in the disposition of the drapery and the type of the heads, it reveals unmistakably the hand of the master who modelled the 'Pietà' in the Berlin Museum. The colouring, too, which is in faultless preservation, scarcely even darkened, shows the same tints, the same simplicity and absence of ornament.

Another group in the same church is on the second altar on the left and represents the 'Mourning at the foot of the Cross.' The Virgin, St. John, the Magdalen and a third holy woman, St. Francis and the Baptist are assembled round the body of the Saviour which the Virgin holds in her lap. The principal figures are grouped as

in the Berlin 'Pietà,' except that the feet and the right arm of the Christ hang down, and the Magdalen crosses her hands upon her breast. A certain streak of modernity is evident in this group, which, with the exception of the very sympathetic figure of the Magdalen, is decidedly inferior to the other two as well in execution as in composition and sentiment.

Florence possesses a third 'Pietà' in the small Church of S. Felice in Piazza. The figures are grouped much as in the Berlin work, only closer together, and are somewhat more animated. The Magdalen bends over the knees of the dead Christ, whose head and right arm hang down and whose body is supported by the Virgin's left hand. The colouring, though much darkened, is the original; it corresponds in every way to that of the two groups first described, to which, however, this group is distinctly inferior both in conception and execution. The head of the St. John is particularly commonplace.

A 'Pietà' in the Victoria and Albert Museum acquired with the Gigli-Campana Collection corresponds to the Berlin group in the number and grouping of the figures. The colouring is unfortunately washed off. It is perhaps the most animated of any, and the most touching, especially the figure of the St. John, who looks up with an expression of poignant grief. In the same collection is a single figure of a kneeling 'Magdalen' (No. 4499, named in the catalogue 'A Virgin in adoration'), obviously part of a group of this kind and by the same sculptor. It accords almost exactly with the Magdalen of the Berlin group; the original paint is washed off and the extremities are damaged.

The character of all these groups is so identical that they can only have had a common origin, and that must undoubtedly be sought in Florence, seeing that they are without exception still in churches there, or are known to have come from that city. As far as I can trace, however, there is no documentary evidence of the name of the artist. Hence we can only make our own deductions from the style of the works, and by comparing them with kindred Florentine sculpture.

Let us begin by trying to determine as far as may be their date of origin. In the case of the two groups in S. Salvadore al Monte we have the date of the church to go upon. It was built by Cronaca from a legacy left by Castello Quaratesi and was consecrated in

1501. The 'Entombment' in the lunette, at any rate, must be contemporary with the church, as the proportions of the doorway are accurately calculated to admit it, and the frame of the group corresponds exactly with the door-posts. Its origin may therefore with certainty be assigned to the beginning of the century.

With this period too—the turn of the century—the character of the groups is in accordance. In the 'Entombment' and the 'Pietà' in Berlin, Verrocchio's influence is apparent in the type of the Christ, the modelling of some of the figures, and the folds of the double robes, whereas the tendency towards generalisation of form, abstract beauty, and absence of ornament proclaims the dawn of the Late Renaissance. And in proportion as the other groups are inferior to these two in fidelity to nature, so their date of origin must be advanced. The latest of them, especially those works in the Victoria and Albert Museum, were probably produced between 1510 and 1520. For their creator, therefore, we must look for a Florentine sculptor, the period of whose chief activity falls in the first decades of the sixteenth century.

All the groups being in clay, we would of course turn to the actual clay-modellers. But at that period these were confined almost exclusively to the della Robbia family and their few imitators. And among the numerous glazed terra-cotta works of this family there are, in point of fact, several exhibiting the closest relationship to the groups in question.

These glazed groups I have attributed in Burckhardt's *Cicerone* to Giovanni della Robbia; and as this ascription has not been contested, I think I need not fear opposition if I name that artist as the sculptor of the 'Pietà' groups I have just described. For comparison I will point out two large glazed groups in the Museo Nazionale at Florence: a lunette with a 'Pietà' bearing the inscription HOC · OPVS · FECIT · IOANES · ANDREE · DE ROBIA · AÑO · DÑI · MDXXI. (Plate LXXXV.), and an altar with a 'Pietà' group at the foot of the Cross, corresponding so exactly to a signed and dated 'Nativity' beside it of 1521 as to leave no doubt of Giovanni della Robbia's authorship. The altar in the Bargello is almost identical with the 'Pietà' groups in S. Salvadore al Monte and in S. Felice. The oval faces, the lack of individuality, the passive expression of their grief, the plain unadorned garments with the long, deep folds are the same in both, so that the most casual observer would refer them

to a common origin.[1] This opinion will be further confirmed if we look round among contemporary Florentine sculptors—Andrea Sansovino, Rovezzano, Ferrucci, etc., not to speak of Michelangelo —whose style is so utterly different that it would be impossible to name any one of them as the author of these groups.

The thick uneven glaze, crude colouring, and rude workmanship of the groups certainly cause them to compare unfavourably with works such as the 'Entombment' in San Salvadore or the 'Pietà' in the Berlin Museum, but in earlier authenticated works of Giovanni della Robbia, for instance the exquisite Fountain Niche in S. Maria Nuova in Florence (1497), we have proof that in his young days he was quite capable of producing groups on the level of these.

In his youthful works he is still unquestionably his father's follower, whose happy beauty-loving spirit illumines all the figures. A very different spirit breathes from these 'Pietà' groups, even taking into consideration the difference of subject. Here, in place of the vivid sense of life, the art that drew all its inspiration from nature, we have a harsh and austere view, which pushes simplicity to the verge of the commonplace, and is concerned to reduce all individuality and diversity of type to one dead level of conventionalised beauty. What, we ask, brought about this extraordinary revolution in Giovanni della Robbia's art? Was it merely a passing and personal phase, or were other Florentine artists affected in the same way? And, if such were the case, did this revolution exercise any serious influence on the development of Florentine art? These are questions which inevitably occur to one when examining these singular works, and to which I will endeavour briefly to suggest the answer.

The figure round which the history of Florence surges at the close of the fifteenth century is that of Savonarola; and on a considerable number of the most eminent among the Florentine artists the life and work and aims of the great Friar of S. Marco made the most profound impression. Among his most ardent disciples we find such names as Botticelli, Perugino, Lorenzo di

[1] There are other details, besides, which lead one to refer these works to the della Robbia family, particularly to Giovanni. The two *putti* with a vase on the arch over the 'Entombment' in S. Salvadore al Monte, are similarly placed to those over the lunette of Giovanni's Fountain Niche in S. Maria Nuova. The formation of the vase, too, is the same as that of other vases in Giovanni's works, and occurs as an independent ornament among the glazed blue or gilded pottery from the della Robbia workshop.

Credi, Fra Bartolommeo, several well-known miniaturists, the architect Cronaca (builder of the Church of S. Salvadore al Monte, containing the two groups described above), the sculptors Ferrucci, Baccio da Montelupo, Baccio Baldini, Giovanni delle Corneole, Andrea della Robbia and his sons. Savonarola's tragic end and his unshaken courage even in the hour of death so affected Bartolommeo that he entered the Monastery of S. Marco, where, as Vasari tells us, two sons of Andrea della Robbia had already taken the vows under Savonarola. For years Fra Bartolommeo renounced all thought of art, and even so Sandro Botticelli rarely handled a brush after Savonarola's death.

One is very apt to think of Savonarola's relation to art as a purely negative one, to regard him—because of the famous *auto-de-fé* in which many a priceless art treasure was delivered to the flames—in the light of a despiser of art or even an iconoclast. But had his teachings offered nothing positive to art, be sure so many artists, and those the highest of their class, would never have been among the most devoted of his adherents. And of this Savonarola's sermons bear the most eloquent witness. It is not art as such that the reformer condemns, but only its worldly side, the intrusion of earthly and even of carnal sentiment and gaudy ornament into religious subjects. Over and over again Savonarola declares openly what he censures in the art of the day, what he would set in its place. With art that is not occupied with religious subjects he will not have anything to do, and more especially he condemns the representation of the nude as unchaste and corrupt. In their religious compositions he reproaches the artists of Florence for the very qualities which captivate us in the works of the Quattrocento —the natural and individual conception, and the translation of these sacred subjects into the language of cheerful everyday life by means of the familiar costumes and accessories, the rich ornaments, the home landscape immediately surrounding them. 'Like your courtesans ye dress and deck the Mother of God and give her the features of your sweethearts': thus he thunders at them from the pulpit. Chaste and austere shall be their conceptions, he demands; the sacred figures shall be lifted high above the common things of daily life, and made clearly distinguishable for what they are; their costume must be simple and unadorned and in accordance with the times in which they lived.

Such demands as these naturally cut away the ground from under the feet of Quattrocento art, whose highest aim had ever been to hold the mirror up to nature; and the greater command the artist attained over the various mediums of expression, the more marked grew his naturalistic tendencies, and the greater his delight in reproducing those innumerable familiar details of everyday life, so dear to the heart of the Italian, so enchanting to the eye. No doubt they went too far in this direction towards the end of the fifteenth century, and Savonarola's strictures were by no means undeserved; indeed, he did good service to Art by thus striking at the root of a growing evil, and boldly proclaiming what many of his contemporaries must have felt but dared not express.

Their eyes thus opened, and their hearts stirred to the depths by Savonarola's preaching, the artists themselves were the first to acclaim the friar's reforming utterances, and in their enthusiasm carried out his ideas to the letter. In the choice of subject alone, especially with Savonarola's most fervent adherents, we see the influence of his teachings at work. In his threatenings of the wrath to come, in his exhortations to repentance and reformation, the preacher had always laid great stress on the aspect of Christ as the Crucified and the Redeemer. The death of the Saviour and the mourning for him was therefore never so favourite a subject in Florentine art as at the turn of that century. Besides Giovanni della Robbia (to name only the foremost artists), Pietro Perugino depicts scarcely any other in the last years of the fifteenth century; the fresco of the 'Crucifixion' in S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, the 'Entombment' in the Palazzo Pitti, the 'Gethsemane' and the 'Pietà' in the Accademia were all produced between 1494 and 1497. The last-mentioned picture is so closely related to Giovanni's group in the Berlin Museum that it seems like the picture model for it. About the same time were produced Michelangelo's 'Entombment' in the National Gallery, and Botticelli's and Filippino's in the Pinakothek in Munich. Sansovino's 'Pietà' in S. Spirito falls somewhat later, as does the commission to Filippino for the great 'Descent from the Cross' (now in the Accademia at Florence), which Perugino finished in 1504. In these years, too, Fra Bartolommeo paints his fresco of the 'Last Judgment' for S. Maria Nuova and Michelangelo carves his famous 'Pietà' in St. Peter's at Rome—by far the most magnificent monument in this direction of Art in existence.

In all these works, as in the whole of Florentine art of that period, the influence of Savonarola's teachings is clearly discernible. Scarce a trace remains of that pure *joie de vivre*, that joyous riot of figures, the almost over-emphasised realism, the delight in ornament and rich detail and the gorgeous colouring so peculiarly characteristic of Florentine art immediately before the appearance of Savonarola. Instead, we have a grave and austere conception of life, extending even to cheerful subjects, a visible striving after the grand and noble in outline, the plain and simple in composition, and the creation of settled types, regular in form and feature; a studiously quiet disposition of drapery, the abandonment of all detail and ornament, and a marked preference for low-toned, not to say harsh, colouring.

In this return to absolute simplicity, and the reliance for effect on beauty of line and form, the foundation was laid on which Michelangelo and Raphael built up their classical masterpieces. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that this reaction against the prevailing frivolity of the times had its drawbacks. The art of Florence at this period becomes stilted and unconvincing; composition and attitude are exaggeratedly restrained, the figures affectedly passive in expression; and it is impossible to avoid feeling that the artist is forcibly curbing his natural inclination and thereby hindering the proper growth of his powers. And herein lay the weak point of the whole movement, which, in any case, was too violent and revolutionary to last. Nevertheless, it exercised a very marked and peculiar influence on the development of the Late Renaissance far beyond Florence, and on the character of the whole art of the Cinquecento.

In the light of these observations let us glance once more at the 'Pietà' groups by Giovanni della Robbia, as the best of their kind at the period in question. In these groups Giovanni has given us nothing absolutely new. We meet with renderings of the subject in the plastic art of Northern Italy at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century: Niccolò dell' Arca executed his 'Pietà' group in S. Maria della Vita at Bologna several decades before Giovanni, and the groups by Guido Mazzoni from Modena were produced at the same time as the Florentine works, some, indeed, earlier. But while the former—probably under Northern influence—are limited to two figures only, and in the latter the

grouping and the costume of the accessory figures show a direct dependence on the morality plays of the time, Giovanni's groups are composed on sound artistic principles, and are the outcome of intense religious feeling. But instead of the wild, uncontrolled grief, the gestures of despair we find in Donatello's representations of the same subjects, these figures convey a sense of sorrow so deep that it can hardly find the relief of tears. In the noble simplicity of form and grouping, and in the modelling of the dead Christ, one discerns the influence of Verrocchio, but Giovanni is anxiously concerned to smooth away the angular and harsh realism of his great prototype, to beautify, but at the same time to generalise, his individual forms. Thus what the work gains in beauty and restraint it loses in vitality, in that emotion that grips the heart and rivets the attention. There is a certain air of self-consciousness, an intentional reserve about the groups, that makes them monotonous and jejune, and is only increased by the extreme finish of the modelling.

And so it is that Giovanni della Robbia fails either to charm and endear himself to us like his predecessors in the Quattrocento, or to overawe us like his mighty successors. Nevertheless we must not deny this phase of art its meed of praise; in its close relation to the historical movement of the times, and in its marked and far-reaching influence on the development of the culminating period of Italian art, it is undoubtedly deserving of our attention.

XII

LEONARDO DA VINCI AS SCULPTOR

MODERN art criticism has often done least justice to the greatest masters. Occupied before all things with the questions whether a work of art were genuine or spurious, in good preservation or otherwise; based from the outset on unimportant details and side issues, and concerned by preference with the work of minor artists, it has plodded laboriously and conscientiously from picture to picture, from sculpture to sculpture, from drawing to drawing, penetrating, however, but little into the true spirit of Art, seldom if ever regarding Art as a whole or in its relation to culture, and paying but scant attention to the bolder and more unconventional spirits who did not confine themselves to the beaten track. As a result our knowledge of these masters, instead of being advanced, has been hindered, if not altogether retarded. This is particularly the case with Leonardo da Vinci: Crowe and Cavalcaselle have simply ignored him; Morelli stripped his *œuvre* to that extent that the artist was left standing like a leafless tree, and Morelli's followers, thinking themselves in duty bound to hand on their master's tradition, do their utmost to discourage and hinder free inquiry into Leonardo's art.

Leonardo, the most 'modern' of men, the boldest artist and profoundest investigator and discoverer in the wide range of Natural Science and all its branches, undoubtedly offers extraordinary difficulties to the student. His works for the most part have either perished or have only come down to us as studies, either incomplete or finished by another hand; and the world-renowned manuscripts, his scientific legacy, were practically unknown until a short time ago. For this Leonardo himself is in a great measure to blame, for in order to prevent his notes being used by any one else he wrote them from right to left, and purposely confused and disconnected them, intending eventually to arrange and elaborate them into regular

treatises, a plan which, like most of his great ideas, was never carried out, owing to his unsettled and ceaselessly active life. The chief fault, however, that this rich fountain of information has scarcely begun to flow as yet, lies with our own lack of enterprise, for our natural scientists have hardly ventured to approach this book with seven seals, not alone from fear of the almost indecipherable writing and the difficult language or the still greater obstacles presented by the sorting out and putting together of notes relating to such widely different subjects, but before all things from the lack of sufficient preparation and of interest in the scientific knowledge of earlier times. 'Natural Science is still so much in its infancy,' said Helmholtz when asked to assist in the publication of Leonardo's writings, 'it has still so many of the most difficult and important problems to solve, that a history of its various branches could not seriously be engaged upon as yet.' Only in quite recent years have the first attempts been made to study Leonardo's significance as a scientific pioneer, and the publication of his manuscripts has been undertaken by the French and Italian Governments, as well as by various private individuals. The first impulse to the movement came from a German investigator, Dr. Paul Müller-Walde, who had made Leonardo's work as scientific pioneer and artist the subject of years of study, publishing from time to time, especially in the *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, certain portions of his discoveries.

Various and peculiar reasons combine to obstruct a true estimate of Leonardo's position as artist and a clear appreciation of his works. First among these is the idea that the works of this genius must necessarily far outnumber those of all other artists. Herein the fact is overlooked that Leonardo was the predecessor of Michelangelo and Raphael, Titian and Correggio, by almost a generation, that he and nearly all his works belong to the Quattrocento, and that he was almost a contemporary of Botticelli and Ghirlandaio, whose early development he certainly influenced. Again, it is apt to be forgotten that the scientist in Leonardo was partially detrimental to the artist; that in the pursuit of scientific interests he made all sorts of technical experiments in his artistic work—only too often prejudicial to them—in the course of which he would elaborate his paintings to that extent that he tired of them or they were ruined, or else left them unfinished or handed them

over to pupils. As to his work as sculptor, it sufficed to know that his famous equestrian statue went to pieces in his own lifetime, and that therefore no trace of it remained. Anything else that might be attributed to him was contemptuously repudiated without further question. Another circumstance which added to this latter difficulty was that up till quite recently very little was known of Leonardo's master Verrocchio, and still less of the proper attribution of the works which issued from his great *bottega*, where Leonardo worked as an assistant for five years. However, now that a good beginning has been made in this direction, it is time to attack seriously the question as to Leonardo's position as a sculptor, and whether we possess any plastic works which may be attributed to him.

We have to thank Dr. Paul Müller-Walde, who some years ago published in the *Jahrbuch*[1] most valuable studies on Leonardo's monumental works, for the information that Leonardo was commissioned to execute another equestrian monument besides that to Francesco Sforza, the model and even the bronze cast of which were destroyed under the vandalism of the French soldiery, namely, the great tomb monument to Gian Francesco Trivulzio, Marshal of France, to be surmounted by his equestrian statue. All that we know of either, excepting a few little bronze models of horses and a small copy of the rider's figure under Sforza's horse, is from Leonardo's own numerous drawings and studies. Dr. Müller-Walde has discussed these monuments and everything bearing upon them so exhaustively that there is no need for me to make further mention of them.

These two colossal monuments, which occupied the chief part of Leonardo's time while in Milan, prove beyond a doubt that the artist must already have been very actively engaged as sculptor. That in the Rattier relief-portrait of 'Scipio' in the Louvre we have a work of Leonardo from the period when he was the moving spirit of Verrocchio's workshop I have already sought to prove by pointing out its resemblance to numerous youthful heads among Leonardo's earlier drawings, more especially to the celebrated profile of a warrior in the Malcolm Collection in the British Museum.[2]

[1] XVIII., 1897, p. 92 *et seq.*; XX., 1899, p. 81.

[2] Vasari, of course, mentions two such profile reliefs of antique heroes sent by Lorenzo the Magnificent to Matthias Corvinus. He calls them Alexander and Darius respectively, and says

LEONARDO DA VINCI

PLATE LXXVI

LEONARDO DA VINCI

PIETÀ

Santa Maria del Carmine, Venice

A second, still more notable sculpture, the well-known bust of a young girl clasping a bunch of primroses in the Museo Nazionale at Florence, has recently from various sides been adjudged as a production of Leonardo's while working under and with Verrocchio, on the grounds of a comparison with his (unfortunately mutilated) portrait of 'Ginevra dei Benci' in the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna, and with the sketchy copy of the complete picture owned by the Marchese Pucci in Florence. It must be conceded, however, that the almost anxious care in the execution of the bust and a certain dry precision, noticeably in the 'Scipio' relief, make the execution of these works by Leonardo's own hands more than improbable, even apart from the consideration that an artist who brought scarcely one of his multifarious productions to completion could hardly be credited with a piece of polished sculpture. Then, too, considering the relations of the then only twenty-year-old artist to his master, it would be almost impossible to discover whether the model should be attributed to Leonardo alone, or whether and to what degree Verrocchio had a part in it. The design for both pieces may, however, with fair certainty be claimed for Leonardo.

Though, unfortunately, nothing remains of Leonardo's two great monuments but his hasty sketches, though the two marble sculptures which he designed were, as to their execution, the products of Verrocchio's *bottega*, there exists a group of plastic works of another class from the same source which I believe we may confidently accept as Leonardo's actual handiwork. These consist entirely of reliefs in bronze. One of them, it is true, is in plaster, but from the treatment is obviously after a now lost bronze relief, or the model for one. This is the allegorical composition in the Victoria and Albert Museum known as the 'Strife' (Plate LXXXVI.). Here, as in Florence, where it had been in private possession for more than half a century, it ranks as a work of Leonardo. Another much damaged copy is in the Palazzo Saracini at Siena, where for years it has stood under a table. Owing to its small size, poor medium, and bad state of preservation, this work has never received

they were in bronze. Seeing that Vasari's account was not written till close on a hundred years after the production of the works, and only from hearsay, as the originals had been in Hungary for that length of time, we must not trust too implicitly to the correctness of this statement. It seems to me very probable that the 'Scipio' relief in the Louvre, for the pendant to which—perhaps a 'Hannibal'—the drawing in the British Museum might very well be the sketch, was one of the two reliefs which Lorenzo presented to the King of Hungary.

the attention it merits, although its importance has been pointed out from time to time and the Museum has issued casts of it for sale. Motive and composition are alike remarkable at the first glance. Not that an allegorical subject is in itself anything unusual in the Quattrocento, but the poignancy and dread reality with which it is here set forth are unapproached by any true Quattrocentist, be he painter or sculptor. The scene is placed in a crowded square enclosed on the right by an open *loggia*, on the left by part of a fine rotunda, and at the back by a low wall above, and through the open gates of which we have a vista of a wide street of palaces. Through the midst of the crowd storms a youthful female figure of almost manly contours, the left arm and bosom bared, brandishing a stout staff in the right hand, the head turned sharply back, while with wild voice and gesture she incites the people to strife and bloodshed. In the foreground to the right of her a man grasps a fleeing woman by the hair, his sword uplifted to strike her down; near him another figure watches the flight eagerly; to the left an old man bends despairingly over the body of a woman. In each corner of the extreme foreground crouches a man just wakened by the uproar out of sleep. To the right under the *loggia* on a raised throne sits a judge addressing himself to a woman leaning against a pillar before him and evidently about to be seized by an executioner in full armour, while a man on a bench below the judge raises his hands in supplication. In the middle distance is another group of a man in the act of cutting down a woman; to the left, under the arches of the great rotunda and on the balcony above, a row of men looking on at or resting from the fight; strewed about the square the bodies of the fallen; through the open gates a vista of people in violent movement. All the figures excepting the allegorical one and the executioner are entirely nude.

The title 'Strife' is unquestionably the right one; in all probability the artist desired to characterise in it some particular circumstance—whether civil war in general or some special incident in Italian or Florentine history it would be difficult to determine; but certain striking peculiarities lead one to infer some such allusion. Among the true Quattrocentists we may seek in vain for a master who can arrange a composition so rich and so full of violent movement with such perfect balance and clearness, so full of detail and yet so rounded as a whole, who would be capable of presenting the

LEONARDO DA VINCI

THE FLAGELLATION

The University, Perugia

VERROCCHIO

THE ENTOMBMENT

Museum, Berlin

motive in so dramatic a manner and building up so magnificent a *mise-en-scène*. But the architecture alone vouches for the fact that here we are in mid-Quattrocento. Like all Renaissance artists, the sculptor of this relief was anxious to appear entirely modern; where the buildings are not reproductions of the antique, as the rotunda to the left and a similar one in the right background, the pillars have the peculiar mixed Ionian capitals with a band of pipes, the windows have the round arch or are straight above with a narrow, straight frame, therefore just the architecture we see in the works of Giuliano da Maiano and the elder San Gallo in the seventies. In all else the artist shows himself already almost pure Cinquecento: in the nudity of the figures and the anatomy of the forms, in the perfectly conscious striving after a rich and symmetrical construction of the composition, in the strict adherence to the main motive, in the great variety of movement, in the marked feeling for beauty, and in the masterly management of the architecture as a setting to the dramatic action and to deepen the vista. Nevertheless, a certain lack of confidence, even here and there of technical skill, betrays the young artist to whom something of his Quattrocento training still clings. Thus the proportions are not always quite successful; the treatment and emphasis of the *contraposte* become in parts monotonous and too intentional. That the artist is a Florentine is clearly demonstrated by the composition as a whole and each separate detail; that he got his training in the School of the Florentine naturalists of the second half of the Quattrocento is shown in the modelling of the nude figures; the thick-set forms, the broad shoulders, the full hair, the way in which the free leg appears almost to drag, the violent action, the moving figures, all bear witness to Verrocchio's workshop. That Verrocchio himself could not be the artist is at once apparent by a comparison with one of his authenticated reliefs —the 'Beheading of John the Baptist,' the 'Death of Francesca Tornabuoni,' the 'Resurrection,' etc.—which, in their even, high relief, are entirely different from the picture-like treatment of this composition, which stands out boldly in the foreground and recedes to the background in a series of graduated planes. Nor did Verrocchio ever reach this combined richness and lucidity of design. But in that master's *bottega* there was no one to whom such work could possibly be credited, saving Leonardo, who was Verrocchio's pupil and assistant from 1472 for five or six years. Not only are

all those Cinquecento touches peculiarly characteristic of the young Leonardo, but also certain details to which Dr. Müller-Walde has always drawn attention in the early works, more especially in the sketches for the 'Adoration of the Magi' in the Uffizi and for an 'Adoration of the Shepherds' planned at the same time. Several of these hastily jotted figures might just as well be sketches for the 'Strife' relief,—for instance, the nude female figure with averted head, some of the many standing, walking, or crouching youths, the 'Victoria' in a drawing in the British Museum, the dancing maidens in a drawing in the Accademia at Venice, and so on. Very characteristic of Leonardo's early period, too, is the way the thick curling hair of the men gathers to a full knot on the forehead.

But the relief in the Victoria and Albert Museum is not the only one of its kind; two others of similar character and size and equally diversified in composition afford a very clear idea of the artist's manner while working under Verrocchio, supporting at the same time the old attribution of the 'Strife' relief to Leonardo, and giving further points towards the correct dating of these works. Unlike the South Kensington relief, which is merely a plaster copy, both these pieces are the original bronze panels. The one—a 'Pietà at the foot of the Cross' (Plate LXXXVII.)—is in S. Maria del Carmine in Venice, where it passed for a work of Sansovino's. I myself claimed it for Verrocchio,[1] on the strength of which Adolfo Venturi attributed also to Verrocchio a very similar relief with the 'Scourging of Christ' (Plate LXXXVIII.) in the University Collection at Perugia (lately removed to the Gallery) and there assigned to Vincenzo Danti. A comparison of the two bronzes with the stucco relief at South Kensington and Leonardo's early drawings, however, makes these names more than doubtful, and leads to the conclusion that not Verrocchio, but his pupil Leonardo, executed all these reliefs some time during the years he worked in that master's studio.

Of the two the Perugia panel shows the closer relationship with the South Kensington plaster relief. To begin with, the *mise-en-scène* is very similar. On a raised terrace in front of a stately *loggia* Christ, bound to a pillar, is being scourged by two myrmidons, while Pilate looks on from a raised throne on the right, and Pharisees and the people fill the background. Quite in the foreground, on the

[1] *Archivio Storico dell' Arte*, 1893, p. 77.

steps leading to the terrace, sits the Virgin with St. John and a couple of soldiers; to right and left of the scene rise imposing Renaissance palaces and a classical rotunda, all very similar to those in the London relief. The position and attitude of the judge are almost identical, even to the man on the bench close to him. However, out of deference to the subject, most of the figures, with the exception of Christ, the scourgers and soldiers, are draped. The architecture is the same in every detail: the style of the capitals, the form and framework of the doors and windows, some of which here have flat gables and are framed in pilasters. Some of the figures certainly are reminiscent of Verrocchio—for instance the crouching figures in high relief in front of the steps, and the dignified figure of the accuser who addresses Pilate—but not to any very great degree. Instead of the very heavily lined garments with their rounded folds, which are invariable with him, we have here the thinnest of draperies lying close to every contour of the body (as if clapped wet on to the lay figure), and forming sharp folds. Here, too, the relief is graduated from figures almost in the round in the foreground to the flat, sketched-in buildings and forms of the background, though not so gradual or skilfully done as in the 'Strife.' The two bald heads in the background are extremely characteristic Leonardesque types. Very fine, too, is the figure on the right, a warrior leaning on his spear, similar to the youth in the corresponding part of the 'Strife'; very noble and free is the movement of the Christ as he shrinks under the blows of the scourge. In descriptive force, in diversity and grace of movement and dramatic sentiment, this composition is not far behind the 'Strife.' The building up of the scene, the architectural setting, the high perspective point of view, the slender extremities and supple movements of the figures, in short, nearly all the artistic methods are the same, only not yet so richly and freely developed. The treatment shows an unchiselled cast over a model relief in wax that was only partly laid on, and in places already crushed or broken off—another unmistakable trait wherein we recognise Leonardo, so brimming over with imagination, but with too little patience in carrying out his artistic projects. The 'Scourging' is so closely akin to the 'Pietà' in the S. Maria del Carmine at Venice that one would be inclined at the first glance to regard them as companion compositions, and as probably forming part of a Passion series; but they are not quite duplicate in size, the Venice relief

being somewhat higher and narrower than that in Perugia. However, in the scale of the figures, the style of relief, in grouping and treatment generally, the two panels bear the closest affinity. One would very readily connect this work with Verrocchio, especially if its relationship to the above-mentioned reliefs were disregarded. The symmetrical grouping of the angels on either side of the Cross recalls the angels beside the *mandorla* on the Forteguerri tomb, the figure of the Magdalen that of the Hope in the same composition; the high-relief figures in the immediate foreground, especially the Christ and St. John, might almost be Verrocchio types. But the same qualities that in the 'Strife' and the 'Scourging' bear witness against Verrocchio, and for his pupil Leonardo, are present here. Moreover, we possess a relief of a similar nature by Verrocchio's own hand: the clay relief of the 'Entombment' in the Berlin Collection (Plate LXXXIX.), and one of his most beautiful compositions, which brings out the differences between the two artists in the clearest manner, for which reason the two works are here reproduced. The picture-like treatment of the Venetian panel, graduated from very high to quite flat relief, the thin clinging garments with narrow folds, the studied building up of the rich composition, the masterly movement and the dramatic rendering of grief—all witness to Leonardo. The seated figures correspond to those in the 'Scourging'; the wonderful figure of the wailing Magdalen is a study of the same beautiful female figure which served the artist as model for the 'Strife' relief, to which it bears a close resemblance both in attitude and treatment. The grief expressed in this figure, as in that of the woman near her bending over the group surrounding the body of the Lord, doubly marked beside the speechless, tearless sorrow of the two Maries, is as powerful and natural as in Niccolò dell' Arca's group of the 'Mourning for Christ' in S. Maria della Vita at Bologna, though here there are an added grace of movement and beauty of expression. The hovering angels on each side of the Cross, whose restraint of feeling is in delicate contrast to the wild grief of the women, may be compared in depth and variety of sentiment to the angels in Giotto's 'Crucifixion' scenes, combined with a beauty and grace of form and movement only to be equalled in some of Leonardo's drawings of dancing girls (in the Accademia at Venice and elsewhere). Though the figures of the two wailing mourners and of the angels are carried out with evident loving care, other parts of the

LEONARDO DA VINCI

JUDGMENT OF PARIS

Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris

HANS MEMLING

PORTRAIT OF NICCOLÒ SPINELLI

Museum, Antwerp

relief are only hastily sketched in, like the group of men to the left of the Cross, where the marks of the modelling-tool in the wax are plainly visible, and this applies also to the limbs of the foreground figures, particularly of the Christ. Here again Leonardo, impatient for other and greater achievements, has not troubled to bring the work to completion.

This last relief is of special interest because it can be accurately dated, and thus affords substantial assistance towards the dating of this whole group of Leonardo's works. For in the right-hand corner of this composition, but modestly in the background so that the attention may in no way be distracted from the sacred scene, three figures of the donor's family are introduced. The marked profile of the older man exhibits—as I have already pointed out—the well-known features of Federigo of Montefeltro, and he has here the deep scar between the eyes, the result of a wound in 1450. But we may settle the date still more accurately from one of the other two figures; the little boy kneeling in front of Federigo is his son Guidobaldo, as is proved by the splendid portrait of the duke with his infant son by Melozzo (or Justus van Gent?) in the Barberini Palace at Rome. The child in the relief is three years old at the most, and as he was born in January 1472, the relief must have been executed in 1475 or perhaps even the previous year. On what occasion Federigo gave the commission to Leonardo, or perhaps Verrocchio, as master of the studio, I have not been able to ascertain so far.

Only in the last century did the church in Venice receive the 'Pietà' panel; till then it had been in the possession of an Italian nobleman in Urbino or the neighbourhood. Close by, in Perugia, is the other relief of the 'Scourging,' executed most probably immediately after this one, but decidedly not later than 1475, and to which perhaps it formed the companion panel. Despite its close affinity to these panels the 'Strife' relief shows a decided advance, both in technique and composition, and must consequently be dated a good year or two later. A fourth smaller relief, a plaquette representing the 'Judgment of Paris,' in the Dreyfus Collection in Paris, appears to be the earliest of this group of works (Plate xc.). Like the judges in the 'Strife' and the 'Scourging,' Paris is seated on a raised throne of rock in the act of offering the apple to Venus, who stands before him; the two other goddesses, in long clinging draperies (the Venus is nude) through which the forms are visible,

turn away and clasp each other's hands to seal their bond of revenge. The rapidly sketched and low relief is clumsily cast and without an attempt at chiselling, even the many bubbles in the metal are not smoothed away. The forms, the drapery, the treatment of the folds and the style of relief are the same as in the reliefs already described, but the grouping is still simpler and less skilful—three of the figures are in profile, the fourth almost full face—the movement is far less animated and appropriate than in those works, the contours more swollen, particularly as regards the legs, the nude forms of the Venus are almost uncouth, the arm which Paris stretches out is not the front one, but that at the back and flush with the background; in a word, every detail shows the beginner who is still dependent on his teacher. That the figures are almost in one plane, that the relief is kept at an even degree throughout, and that there is no sign of architecture or decorative addition of any kind, may be explained from the extreme simplicity of the motive. In any case, we may consider this plaquette as one of the young artist's very first attempts at metal casting while in Verrocchio's workshop. The exact dating of this group of reliefs is of the utmost value, since it shows us Leonardo as the complete Cinquecentist already at the turning of the third to the fourth quarter of the Quattrocento. The master who had so important an influence on the development of the later tendency of the Quattrocento in Florence and elsewhere was so far ahead of his time, that not till the next generation did he find true appreciation of this, his modern point of view in art. A closer study of the style-peculiarities of these reliefs will therefore dissipate all idea of attributing them to any contemporary Quattrocentist in Florence, such as Verrocchio or Pollaiuolo; even Bertoldo, though his single figures show similar Cinquecento traits, belongs, as regards composition and perception of nature, so wholly to the Quattrocento as to be out of the question. For purely external reasons, then, there remains no one but Leonardo to whom to attribute the reliefs, but all the internal reasons speak for him as well,—all the artistic peculiarities, which are simply so many practical manifestations of the theories propounded by Leonardo in his manuscripts. The compositions are thorough Leonardesque, belong completely to the *haute Renaissance*; indeed, I doubt if any single relief of the Cinquecento can be said to exhibit the

character of the *haute Renaissance* in so pure and complete a degree as this group of reliefs. The artist fairly revels in proclaiming aloud these new and modern aims; first and before all else in the architecture, not only in the *mise-en-scène*, but in the whole architectonic scheme. The master who planned that was a true architect in the fullest sense of the *haute Renaissance*. Width, depth, symmetry, and contrast of line; sharply marked distinction between fore- and back-grounds, the endeavour even to create a middle distance in the relief; perspective foreshortening with high visual point; emphasising of single figures within the groups and their combination as a whole; relation to and movement towards the chief figure or group; the building up of a stage on graduated planes and the splendid architectural setting to the scene, which is nevertheless subordinated to the artistic scheme—all this is fully apparent in our three compositions as the artist's conscious aim, and wonderfully has he achieved it. The perspective is handled in a manner as free as it is lucid, the rich architecture being introduced chiefly to heighten the perspective effect, to assist in the advantageous foreshortening of the figures and groups, as well as to separate and connect them. In the foreshortening of the dead bodies on the ground, and to effect a connection between fore- and back-ground, the artist has gone quite as far as Mantegna in his 'Dead Christ' in the Brera. For this purpose, too, the high visual point—carried out with the utmost skill—has been adopted sometimes at the expense of beauty, as in the figures of the near foreground, which thereby are apt to appear clumsy and distorted.

And that the dramatic effect is on the same high level is evident at a glance. What depth of emotion, what passion and what diversity of manifestation—truly a complete lesson in expression! It is true, one misses in the drawing of the figures something of that clear-cut outline and purity which distinguish most even of the earliest drawings by Leonardo, but that is owing to the difficulties presented to the young artist by modelling in wax, and still more to the indifferent casting. Otherwise the obvious striving after typical and beautiful modelling of the figures on broad and classical lines is just the characteristic trait of these compositions. And that is why, wherever possible, the artist keeps to the nude. His figures are beautiful in contour and of strong, noble model-

ling, the effect of which is heightened by the utmost diversity in movement and pose and by an almost exaggerated emphasis on certain attitudes. Beside the beautiful types of manly youth, broad and straight in the shoulders and narrow in the flanks, their thick locks falling over the brow, we find Leonardo's bearded, large-boned men like those of his early drawings; and beside his slender but splendidly grown young women, a maturer, dignified, and matronly type. Here and there we seem to see a copy from the antique; the 'Apollo Belvedere,' the 'Satyr-torso' in the Uffizi from the Ghiberti-Galli Collection (the man in the foreground striking down a woman); nevertheless it is but the inner affinity of these figures to the antique that calls up classical prototypes to the mind. In the same way several of the youthful male figures remind us of Michelangelo's 'David.'

Another very marked feature of these reliefs is the contrasting arrangement of repose and violent movement, of figures seated, lying and standing, not only for the enrichment of the composition, but in the interests of perspective effect and lucidity of plan. One can follow the artist's wise calculation in this respect down to the smallest details. Note, for instance, in the 'Strife,' how he places the beautiful figure of the youth to the right of the foreground immediately in front of a pillar of the *loggia* to subordinate it, and to avoid its interfering with the imposing effect of the chief figure.

The contrasts in line and grouping are repeated in those of expression and movement, which, again, are brought into harmonious accord by similar methods. Thus, in the 'Strife,' we see on the left repose after the struggle, and on the right the outbreak of the fight; in the right foreground a man grasps a fleeing woman to strike her down, on the left is the contrasting group in which a man throws himself despairingly on the body of a woman; near these stand figures in momentary repose, and through them all storms the dread figure of 'Strife,' which, although set almost in the middle distance, dominates the whole composition.

Though here and there in these works the artist's intention is still somewhat too obvious, yet we can recognise therein the great theorist who strove to bring all he saw under settled laws; and only where he has not been quite successful are we reminded

that it was the work of a young beginner, who, but a few years before, was a peasant lad, and owed all his knowledge to his own energy and keen powers of observation. Compare these compositions with the finest frescoes of a Ghirlandaio or Botticelli, of a Perugino or a Signorelli, how flat and crowded, how planless and disorderly do the latter appear beside them! Even a Donatello, whose Paduan reliefs come nearest in some respects to these works, seems archaic and constrained, while the most renowned compositions of a Fra Bartolommeo, yea, even of a Raphael—the 'School of Athens,' the 'Sacrifice at Lystra,' the 'Preaching of Paul at Athens,' etc.—are but steps along the same path to which, both in writing and example already thirty or forty years before, Leonardo had pointed the way.

XIII

THE FLORENTINE MEDALLIST NICCOLÒ DI FORZORE SPINELLI

AMONG the pictures that have come down to us from the Quattrocento are two portraits—one in the Uffizi, the other in the Antwerp Gallery—of young men in plain burgher's dress and each holding a medal in his hand, from which circumstance it has been assumed that the person represented was a medallist, and, moreover, that both are portraits of one and the same man, *i.e.* Niccolò Spinelli. A comparison of the two, however, proves conclusively that they cannot be identical, as the two faces bear no resemblance whatever to one another. The Antwerp picture (Plate XCI.), formerly attributed to Antonello, and sometimes held to be his own portrait, sometimes that of Pisanello, is that of a young man with expressive features and southern colouring holding in his left hand a coin of Nero bearing the circumscription NERO CLAVD CAESAR AVG GE P M TR P IMP PP Modern art criticism has long since recognised in this picture the hand of Hans Memling, and in the person portrayed most probably the Florentine Nicolas de Spinel, who was employed in 1468 as stamp-cutter at the Court of Burgundy. In the Uffizi picture, which unmistakably betrays its Florentine origin, Julius Friedländer (*Italienische Schaumünzen*, p. 146) recognises likewise the medallist Nicolaus Florentinus, with the proviso, however, that his attribution to Niccolò of the medal of Cosimo which the young man holds in his hand should be correct. He was perfectly right in rejecting the old name for the portrait as that of Pico della Mirandola, seeing that the person depicted bears not the smallest resemblance to the well-known features of that eminent humanist, quite apart from the severe simplicity of the dress. No less convincing is his argument that we have here the portrait of a medallist holding his own masterpiece in his hand. The painter of the picture has hitherto been nameless, but recently there has been some attempt to make Sandro Botticelli responsible for it, as if that great

MEDALS BY NICCOLÒ DI FORZORE SPINELLI

1 1

2 2

3 4

MEDALS BY NICCOLÒ DI FORZORE SPINELLI

artist could ever have drawn such hands as these claws, and that at a time, too, when he painted the 'Valour' and the small 'Adoration of the Magi' of the Uffizi. We have here rather the portrait of himself by a medallist who, like so many of his fellow-artists of that period, was also a painter; moreover, as the landscape background shows, a follower of Baldovinetti. We must set it down to his want of practice and dexterity in painting that the picture so peculiarly appeals to us and stands alone among Florentine paintings up to that time.

The medal in the artist's hand is not painted, but let into the picture—a gilded plaster copy of the well-known medal of the aged Cosimo with the inscription MAGNVS·COSMVS·MEDICES·P·P·P.[1] Now were this medal by the hand of Niccolò Spinelli we would be constrained to regard the portrait as his, and the medallist of Memling's picture as some one else; for though the portrait is of the same period and depicts a young man of similar age, the resemblance goes no further. But the medal itself differs in several points considerably from the numerous other Florentine medals of the same period, more particularly from the authenticated pieces by Niccolò, showing, unlike the master's broad, sketchy treatment, a clear-cut sharpness of outline as if it had been struck, and the head, instead of being in bold relief, is low, and the contours melt into the field of the medal. Friedländer's idea, therefore, found but slight acceptance. Another suggestion putting forward Michelozzo as the maker of this medal would receive still less encouragement from the portrait, seeing that when in 1465, soon after his death, Cosimo was publicly declared 'pater patriae,' the architect was already an aged man; moreover, we know that Michelozzo was not in Florence at all at the time, but living elsewhere. Regarded as a portrait of Niccolò Spinelli, we may therefore consider the picture in the Uffizi as out of the running, and the picture in the Antwerp Gallery consequently as the more important to the question. To be sure, it has been doubted by various critics whether the Florentine stamp-cutter Nicolas de Spinel, employed at the court of Charles of Burgundy, and the well-known Florentine medallist are one and the same person; but if the

[1] There is another and, at the first glance, almost identical medal of Cosimo, with the same reverse and of similar size, with the inscription COSMVS · MEDICES · DECRETO · PVBLICO · P · P · It is, however, considerably higher in relief and differs in the treatment of the forms, so that it is possibly by another hand. The small Cosimo medal is a reduced copy of this one.

correspondence in name and profession, and the fact that there is no record of Niccolò's presence in Florence at that date, would make the assumption highly probable, it seems to me that the medal of Charles's elder brother, Antony of Burgundy, which, judging by his age, must have been executed some time during the sixties, puts it beyond a doubt. For this large and beautiful medal exhibits all the traits of the signed works of Niccolò to a very marked degree (Plate XCII. 1). Friedländer, too, acknowledges it as Florentine work, but attributes it to Guazzalotti, for whom he has an excusable weakness (he was the first to establish the identity of that artist) and whom he confuses with Niccolò on other occasions. Again, among the Florentine medals in the Berlin Collection there is an admirable specimen—hitherto unnamed—showing, though of smaller dimensions, the same bold relief and broad treatment as that of the 'Bastard of Burgundy': the portrait medal of a certain Petrus Maria with a Paris on the reverse (Plate XCII. 2). The same applies to the portrait of a young man in a hood without reverse or inscription exhibited among the plaquettes in the Museo del Castello at Milan.

Granted, then, that Niccolò Spinelli was working in the early days of his art at the court of Burgundy, how is it with regard to his employment by Charles VIII. of France? Natalis Rondot, who has thrown so much light on the history of Art in Lyons, has proved from the city archives that a Florentine goldsmith 'Nicolas de Florence' (whom he without further parley identifies with Niccolò di Forzore Spinelli) was living in Lyons at the end of the fifteenth century, and was employed by Charles VIII. in 1494 while that King was holding his court in Lyons, preparatory to his expedition into Italy; and as we have one large medal of the King and several of his courtiers — all very characteristic Florentine work — it was obviously natural to attribute them to the Florentine medallist Niccolò Spinelli. But Rondot has discovered that his Florentine goldsmith 'Nicolas' was settled in Lyons between 1485 and 1499, in which year his death was recorded, and that he was married to a Frenchwoman, whereas, according to Gaetano Milanesi, Spinelli's wife was a Florentine, and he did not die till 1514. Moreover, the medal of the young Alfonso d'Este (Plate XCII. 3), signed in full by Niccolò—who could not have been in Lyons at the time—is dated 1493. This fact has led to the idea that the above-mentioned French medals must be the work of a third artist of the same name—a com-

pletely mistaken assumption : as we shall see later on, these medals can perfectly well have been produced in Florence in November 1494, when Charles VIII. was in that city with his Generals and his court. Besides, the sole authenticated medal carried out by Rondot's 'Nicolas de Florence' in conjunction with his father-in-law in Lyons, that of Charles VIII. and his Queen, is totally different in its low relief and coinlike character from the splendid Florentine medals of Charles and his Generals.

What with these many false and conflicting conclusions, criticism of the very numerous medals of Florentine origin was lost in a perfect labyrinth of conjecture and vague surmise. But as we have in these medals a most lifelike portrait gallery of the whole circle of eminent men of the Renaissance, closely approaching in artistic value the medallion portraits of a Vittore Pisano, it seems worth while to get at the root of the whole question, and clear away, as far as may be, the misconceptions that have accumulated round these notable works of art.

Let us begin by briefly reviewing the opinions of the various standard authorities who have raised the history of Italian numismatics to its present standpoint. Julius Friedländer is very brief on the subject of Niccolò di Forzore Spinelli ; of the artist's biography, contrary to his usual conscientious methods, not a word ; as unquestionably authenticated works he names four signed medals (the fifth, that of Silvestro d'Uziari, Bishop of Chioggia, of 1485 was then unknown to him) ; to these he adds the rest of the contemporary Florentine medals as works of unnamed artists, with the remark that with some of them one would be led first to think of Guazzalotti, but possibly also of Niccolò, the two artists having 'some slight affinity of style.' Alfred von Sallet speaks of 'Nicolaus Florentinus and the artists of his School' ; Armand, and after him Heiss, mentions a small number of unsigned medals as 'attributed to Niccolò' ; but for the whole remainder with the exception of a few which they assign to Guazzalotti, Pollaiuolo, Francia, etc., they have boldly invented a series of masters, whom they call after the frequently recurring reverses (which they regard as the artist's signature, so to speak), as the 'Maître à l'Espérance,' 'à l'Aigle,' or 'à la Fortune.' With equal sense one might add the master of 'the Three Graces,' of 'the Carità,' of 'the Mercury' and so forth, seeing that these figures recur persistently on many of the reverses in this

group of medals. Then, besides these wholly imaginary, fantastic names, we have others for whose introduction the worthy Gaetano Milanesi is responsible. Though an industrious archivist he is wholly wanting in artistic insight or knowledge, and from some obscure letters in the inscription, or mottoes, or the relations of the persons portrayed to certain artists, or other extraneous circumstances has added such names as della Robbia, Gioacchino Cigliamocchi, Dom. Cennini and others to the ranks of Florentine medallists, just as he has smuggled dozens of other names into Armand's book with as little justification.

And that constitutes up till the present 'the enlightenment afforded us by the Florentine Archives' to which Friedländer pinned his faith, whereas he looked for 'but slight assistance from the surmises formed on style alone'! *Stilkritik* has unfortunately been far too little used with regard to medals, though why that branch of art alone should be omitted I cannot discover. It seems to me rather particularly in place here, for not only the portraits of the obverses, but the designs of the reverses, afford abundant material for critical comparison. Further assistance is obtained from the inscriptions, the form of the characters, etc.; and from the respective costume, age, and known place of residence of the person portrayed many indications towards the probable artist may be gathered. Nevertheless much remains wherein a study of the contemporary records will yield valuable results, particularly as regards the medals of Niccolò Spinelli, of which one hundred and thirty are at present known to me —a sum undoubtedly to be increased in time. Of Niccolò's personal history, too, we know next to nothing.

All the evidences, both external and internal, point to the medals now under consideration being the work of *one* artist; and that that artist can only be Niccolò Spinelli is proved by the five pieces that bear his signature. Of course these numerous medals exhibit various divergent traits, but not more than is the case with any artist whose work extends like Niccolò's over a period of fifty years; who worked now from the original, now from copies, and whose technique differed considerably at different periods. Nevertheless these divergencies are never so great as to justify us in deciding for another artist altogether. It is essentially in medals that the peculiarities of the artist in technique and expression show themselves particularly plainly. That the productions of several

artists, even teacher and pupils (a relationship occurring but seldom just in this branch), should be quite indistinguishable is extremely rare, but that a dozen or even half a dozen medallists should have worked in exactly the same style at one time and in one place is clearly impossible. Individuality shows most conspicuously in this branch of Art, and more especially in so strongly marked and potent a school as the Florentine during the Renaissance.

Peculiar to all these medals is absolutely faithful portraiture combined with great breadth of treatment. They are characterised by unswerving adherence to truth, as by that dignity of conception which can ennoble even harsh and uncouth features; while manly strength, feminine beauty and delicacy, and the radiant charm of youth receive the fullest expression. The execution is invariably bold, broad, even at times sketchy; with the reverses, with which medallists are often most concerned, this artist was not greatly occupied; they are generally careless in treatment, poor in conception, and consist with but few exceptions of but one figure constantly repeated, and usually copied either from the antique or from some contemporary artist. Some of these reverses are absolutely uncouth, especially of such medals as have been restored; occasionally, however, and when not too careless in execution, they are full of charm. Thus his reverses copied from antique cameos and statues are excellent, especially that after the cameo with the 'Three Graces,' which occurs on five different medals (Plate XCII. 5). Very good too is the 'Hercules and Hydra' on the reverse of the Ercole Bentivoglio medal (Plate XCII. 6), in which Antonio del Pollaiuolo's influence is clearly traceable. The composition, 'Chastity as the Curb of Love,' which he twice employs on medals of young persons (the reverse of the Roberto Nasi medal), the 'Music' of the reverse to the Cassandra Fedele medal, a unique piece in the Simon Collection, and the 'Diana' of the Giovanna Tornabuoni-Albizzi medal are reminiscent of figures by Sandro Botticelli and Filippino, of which, very probably, they are a free rendering. The single figures recurring frequently without the slightest change on the reverse of his medals are, however, as lacking in imagination as they are careless, even unskilled, in drawing. This applies to the figures of Hope, Love, Fortune, Nemesis, Wisdom, Victory, Mercury, as well as to those of the Rulers mounted or on foot, and to the Coats of Arms, Emblems, etc. They all have exactly the same character — wooden or

awkwardly moving figures with large extremities, rude features, straggling hair and long ungraceful parallel folds in the fluttering pseudo-classical drapery. Animals are still more superficially characterised and executed, trees or flowers merely indicated. Unless he copies, the artist studiously avoids larger compositions; he cannot even place a few figures side by side with any success, as witness the reverses of the medals of Carlo Federighi and Antonio Pizzamani with the three wooden allegorical female figures in a row. And all his features are monotonously alike. The 'Spes,' which, though the feeblest, occurs the most frequently, the 'Caritàs,' the 'Sapientia' (on an admirable unnamed female medal in the Simon Collection, on a Boccaccio medal and on the large Uzzano), and the 'Fides' of the Fra Alberto Belli medal are almost identical; the 'Nemesis' on the reverse of the Giuliano de' Medici medal, and the 'Minerva' on the Fra Benedetto Fiezzi and that of Ercole d'Este (Heiss, *The Medals of the House of Este*, Plate VII. 3), and the 'Victoria' on the medals of Catarina Riario (Plate XCIII. 2) and of Charles VIII. of France, are similar in pose, drapery, and treatment. Now it is true that of the five signed medals by Niccolò Spinelli three have reverses copied faithfully from antique cameos, the reverse of the fourth is almost entirely covered by an inscription, while the fifth alone bears a design of his own invention, consisting of a 'Florentia' seated under a laurel tree offering flowers: a figure extraordinarily poor in design and rough in execution, and doubly conspicuous as the reverse of the medal of Lorenzo the Magnificent.[1] In design and treatment this figure is typical of the majority of the medals under discussion, and the same hand is discernible at the first glance. It may also be briefly noted that all the inscriptions bear the same character as regards the form of the lettering and the adaptation to the space.

Those who are of opinion that these medals are the work of different artists, the majority of whom also used the same reverse, discover many points of dissimilarity in them. Thus C. von Fabriczy, in his admirable handbook on Italian Medals, considers that the 'Maître à l'Espérance' stands nearest to Niccolò; the work of the 'Maître à la Fortune' betrays rather the artificer than the artist,

[1] This figure is repeated exactly on the much smaller medal of Politian produced about the same time, but a genius is added to the composition offering laurels which he has gathered from the tree under which the 'Florentia' is seated.

especially in the treatment of the portraits,[1] whereas the medals of the 'Maître à l'Aigle' reveal, according to him, a much more important artist. As regards the composition of the reverses I have already explained my totally opposite opinion, and the same holds good for the obverses—they all exhibit the same characteristic broad traits, the hand of an artist pre-eminent in portraiture. Of course, among these hundred and thirty portraits there are as many points of divergence to be noted as in the reverses—indeed more, for whereas the artist usually repeats himself in the compositions of the reverses, each portrait offers fresh points of interest, displays anew a masterly insight into character, and an astounding strength of technique in giving each individuality its best plastic expression. Again, certain divergencies are the result of the fact that on occasion the artist did not work from the original sitter, but from some other copy, or even from his own imagination; in the latter case, as is evident from most of his restored medals, his obverses are as rough and sketchy as his reverses. Extending as these medals do over a period of almost half a century, many of their points of difference must be put down to the space of time separating their production. The earliest is the large medal of Antony of Burgundy (Plate XCII. 1), which from the age of the original we must date as about 1468, when Niccolò was employed as stamp-cutter at the Court of Charles the Bold; the latest, such as that of Pope Leo X. as Cardinal (Plate XCIII. 3), Francesco Lancillotto, and others, were produced in the years immediately preceding his death, 1514. The first-mentioned portrait, probably with that of Giovanni Gaddi (about 1470 to 1475), the earliest medal of his to be found in Florence, is in bold relief, and quite masterly in breadth of treatment and noble simplicity.[2]

Between 1480 and 1490, during which time the many portraits from the *entourage* of Lorenzo de' Medici were produced, the artist's

[1] Fabriczy's opinion in this case is not by any means the universal one, for Julius Friedländer declares one of these medals having the 'Fortuna' on the reverse—that of Alessandro Vecchietti (Plate XCIII. 1)—to be one of the finest of this group of Florentine medals, an opinion in which I entirely concur.

[2] When Friedländer describes this work as 'rude, almost coarse, but nevertheless spirited,' his judgment was doubtless obscured by long familiarity with neatly chased and polished medals, which explains, too, his preference for Niccolò's compatriot Guazzalotti. I have come across few medals to equal this *unicum* of the Berlin Collection in strength, truth to life, and in masterly expression of character. It is more like the work of a monumental sculptor than a medallist and stamp-cutter—the distinguishing mark of nearly all Niccolò's productions.

execution is much more even, at times almost careful, but the portraiture invariably full of individuality and delicate perception of character. In the course of the succeeding decade the work becomes more superficial and careless, the long hair rough and straggling, the pose more wooden, the inscriptions clumsy—peculiarities which increase with the artist's advancing years. For all that, these discrepancies, despite the large number of the works and the length of time over which they extend, are in no sense greater than those to be observed when comparing with one another the portraits of other artists, such as Rembrandt, Van Dyck, or Frans Hals. Moreover, these very differences are to be found among those various groups of Florentine medals which are named from their reverses—yet another proof of the unreasonable nature of that grouping.

The nationality of the person portrayed, the place and time of the production of these medals, in no way precludes their being the work of Niccolò Spinelli, as has frequently been asserted. And this holds good, too, of the portrait medals of French notabilities, even after proving that the goldsmith Niccolò, who was employed in Lyons and died there in 1499, cannot have been identical with our artist. For the medals of Charles VIII. of France and his nobles who were gathered round him in Lyons in 1494 in preparation for the campaign against Italy were not necessarily produced in that city. On the contrary, it is much more probable that the five large medals in question were executed in Florence, seeing that Charles seized and sacked Florence in February of the following year, and remained there for some time with his followers.

The portrait of Antony of Burgundy, too—if one thought to doubt the identity of the Florentine stamp-cutter Nicolas de Spinel, employed by Charles the Bold, with the medallist of the same name—might very well have been executed in Florence or Rome, as Antony was repeatedly in Italy. Florence was even then so much resorted to by distinguished foreigners, that as a general rule we may assume the production of such Florentine medals as represent foreigners or Italians who were native of other cities to have been produced on these occasions. A more particular study of the biographies of the originals of these portraits—a source of information hitherto sadly neglected—would go far to determine these questions. However, we have good reason to assume Niccolò's sojourn in Rome from

1485 till some time in the following year, as we have not only two medals of Pope Innocent VIII. (Plate XCII. 4),[1] one of which is dated 1486, but also a group of others portraying papal Secretaries and Protonotaries which, from the inscriptions as from the age and costume of the originals, may be assigned to this period. Such are the medals for Antonio Geraldini, Bernardo Gamb . . . (dated 1485), Giovanni Mendoza, furthermore, that of the Pope's daughter Teodorina Usamari-Cibò and her young daughter Peretta Usamari, perhaps also that of Bishop Silvio d'Uziari of Chioggia (dated 1485), of Cardinal Giangiacomo Sclafenati, his brother Filippo and the Bishop of Piacenza, Fabritio Marliani, belonging to the same period, as also those of the two Knights of Rhodes, John Kendal and Guillaume Caoursin, who were in Rome in the time of that Pope. Other medals, such as those of Greudner, Bishop of Brixen (one of his two is dated 1502), Antonio Pizzamani the Venetian, the Professor Fra Alberto Belli of Perugia, the young Prince Alfonso of Este (dated 1493, Plate XCII. 3) and his father Ercole (probably contemporary), Catarina Riario Sforza (Plate XCIII. 2)[2] and of her son Ottaviano Riario, were in all probability executed on the occasion of some sojourn of those personages in Florence.

It is curiously interesting from a political and social point of view to study the portraits of the various personages immortalised by Niccolò in his medals. A large number of them belong to the Medici[3] and their immediate circle, from Lorenzo and Giuliano down to Cardinal Giovanni and other, younger, members of the family; amongst them a few not yet definitely recognised

[1] A comparison of the reverse of this well-known medal with that of Niccolò's signed medal of Antonio Geraldini will show that in the former the two figures on the right are almost exactly repeated from the 'Religio' of the Geraldini medal, which in its turn is borrowed from a Roman coin.

[2] The production of this medal has been assumed as after 1488, because in that year Catarina lost her first husband, Girolamo Riario. But there are two editions of the medal, and only on the second does she wear the widow's veil. On the rather larger and very rare first edition the hair is uncovered (cf. Plate XCIII. 2), and must therefore have been executed in Girolamo's lifetime. Later, when her son Ottaviano, for whom she so heroically held the reins of government, came of age, she had his medal (with the equestrian figure of the boy on the reverse) executed by Niccolò, and at the same time a fresh edition of her own. The two reverses are to be found, almost in facsimile, on the medals of Charles VIII., of Jean du Mas, and of Antoine de Gimel of the year 1495.

[3] The attribution of the two well-known large medals of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici and his brother Giovanni to Niccolò seems to me improbable. In their size, the manner of their disposition in the allotted space, the sketchy, relief-like treatment they have far more the character of actual reliefs, and are therefore probably by the hand of a sculptor.

Medici, such as Diamante de' Medici and one, presumably from the inscription, of his young wife.[1] Next we have—dating mostly from the eighties—members of the great families connected with the Medici: the Tornabuoni, Strozzi, Gaddi, Guidi, Salviati, Altoviti, Morelli, Sassetta, Federighi, Nasi, etc. Again, from the circle of men of culture and artists surrounding the Magnifico, lifelike portrait medals have come down to us of Marsilio Ficino and Politian, of the architect Francesco Filarete, the goldsmith Lorenzo Cigliamocchi, Francesco Lancillotto the painter, etc. The idea of making medals to notable citizens of Florence, though long since dead, doubtless originated with Lorenzo. Beside the great poets Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch we find the celebrated Latinist Coluccio Salutati, the two military heroes of the Florentines, Neri Capponi and Niccolò Uzzano, the Secretary Marsuppini, and the two ecclesiastics whom Florence honoured as saints, Gualberto and Archbishop Antonino. Members of certain non-Florentine families whose portraits we meet with among these medals were gathered round the Medici at that period, either in high official positions or as their friends: the Orsini through Lorenzo's wife, the Bentivoglio through Ercole Bentivoglio, commander of the Florentine troops from 1486, the Mirandola through Lorenzo's cultured friend Pico, and many others. The patronage of Innocent VIII. Niccolò doubtless obtained through Lorenzo's friendly relations with that Pope, which finally led to the marriage of Innocent's son with a daughter of Lorenzo. We have seen that Niccolò about the middle of the eighties executed portrait medals of Innocent himself, his daughter and his grand-daughter, as also of a number of high ecclesiastics and officials, and therefore probably spent some considerable time at the Papal Court.

Not that this prolific output of work for Lorenzo il Magnifico and his *entourage* attached the artist in any sense exclusively to the service of that prince; on the contrary we find him, after the manner of Italian artists and *litterati* of the period, working impartially for the bitterest opponents of the Medici. When the French entered Florence he modelled Charles VIII. and the great nobles who accom-

[1] I should say, too, that the medal incorrectly named as that of Niccolò Acciaiuolo represents one of the Medici—possibly a somewhat idealised Giuliano, Lorenzo's brother. The letters N. A. on either side of the head are rather the initial letters of some motto or the like than of those of a name. There is another smaller medal without reverse or inscription having similarly the letters I. A. on either side. This is the charming medal of a young woman in the collection in the Castello at Milan. It is obviously from the hand of Niccolò.

panied him—among them the banished Lorenzino de' Medici, who had returned with the French army. When Savonarola set up his spiritual government in Florence, Niccolò executed one medal after another of the popular friar (Plate XCIII. 4), whose most enthusiastic partisans were to be found among the artists;[1] and the majority of the medals produced between 1496 and 1498 are portraits of followers of the great Frate. However, after his excommunication when popular favour had turned against him, Niccolò had not the slightest compunction in celebrating one of his judges, the old Vicar-General of the Dominicans, Gioacchino della Torre, in a medal dated 1498, the reverse of which shows the dagger and cap, the insignia of his office as executioner. But it is very evident that nothing was thought of his working for these opposing powers, for when—the artist being then over eighty years of age—the Medici were restored, he was at once commissioned to execute medals of Cardinal Giuliano and the younger Pier Francesco de' Medici. The mere fact that the majority of these medals represent the most eminent personages and members of the first families of Florence, or men in close relations with them, irrespective of faction, during a period of nearly forty years, is one proof more that they are the work of *one* artist, and that one Niccolò Florentino. For, then as now, any one requiring a work of the kind would assuredly address himself to the artist most in vogue. But that there should have been half a dozen equally celebrated medallists working in Florence at the same time is as improbable as that they should all have the same style or that there should be no record of a single one but Niccolò.

As with medals in general, the reverses of these Florentine medals are particularly worthy of remark, not indeed, with a few exceptions, for their artistic value, but for the information they afford (cf. Plates LXXX., XCII., and XCIII.). In such cases where these reverses have figural designs and not merely inscriptions, coats of arms and the like, we have seen that they usually present one or more allegorical or

[1] In the collection of J. Simon there is an almost exact copy of the Savonarola medal with the crucifix in the hand, but a bearded profile, which according to the inscription represents Bonagiuntò Manetti, and was probably executed very soon after the similar Savonarola medal. This I would likewise take to be the case with another medal of a monk, seeing that the disposition of the cowl and the whole style are entirely in accordance with that of the smaller Savonarola medals. It is described—but probably incorrectly—as the portrait of the learned Frate Alberto Belli of Perugia, who was already dead in 1482. The reverse of the medal shows the figure of a 'Fides' exactly corresponding to the 'Spes' so frequently employed by Niccolò, whereby the similar Savonarola medals may be definitely accredited to that artist.

mythological figures mostly taken from the antique and very frequently accompanied by inscriptions or mottoes. Like the inscriptions, these figures or groups were often, if not always, chosen and determined by the client or his artistic adviser. The theory concerning the 'Maître à l'Aigle,' the 'Maître à l'Espérance,' etc., which rests on the assumption that these artists used the figures in question on the reverses of their medals as their respective signatures, so to speak, is completely at variance with the evidence of hundreds of medals of the period and with the whole humanist tendency in Italy. The relation of most of these reverses to the portrait on the obverse is not difficult to decipher. Among Niccolò's medals, for instance, the 'Nemesis' serves as reverse to Giuliano de' Medici; the 'Florentia' to Lorenzo; one of the labours of Hercules to the *condottiere* Ercole Bentivoglio; the 'Victoria' to Charles VIII. and Catarina Riario; 'Chastity and Love' to the young Rucellai, and so forth. It is less easy to explain why certain designs are so often repeated, and as reverses to medals representing persons of either sex and very different age and social position. The 'Fortuna' occurs almost exclusively during the period of Savonarola's power; one of the persons portrayed, Daniele Nicolai, has added the sacred monogram I H S as a further testimony to his enthusiasm for the Frate and his teachings. But how are we to trace the connection between the 'Fortuna' and Savonarola? We have another medal with the same reverse dated 1503 (Niccolò Tranqueri in the Simon Collection), and a second of a bearded man unnamed (Heiss, Plate XIV. 1), done, to judge by the costume, some years later. The 'Spes' occurs with scarcely a difference on nineteen medals, according to Armand, and may be followed for thirty years as the reverse to the portrait medals of the most widely divergent personages. The choice of this particular allegorical figure at the end of the Quattrocento is easily understood, though whether that choice had some more particular reason in Florence is a question on which it is to be hoped the intimate students of Florentine history of the period will throw some light. In the deciphering of the numerous inscriptions and mottoes, too, they have a difficult task, but one that will amply repay them.

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